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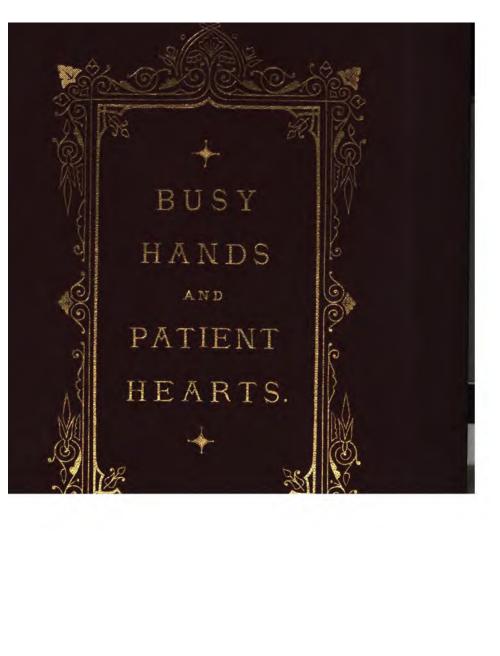
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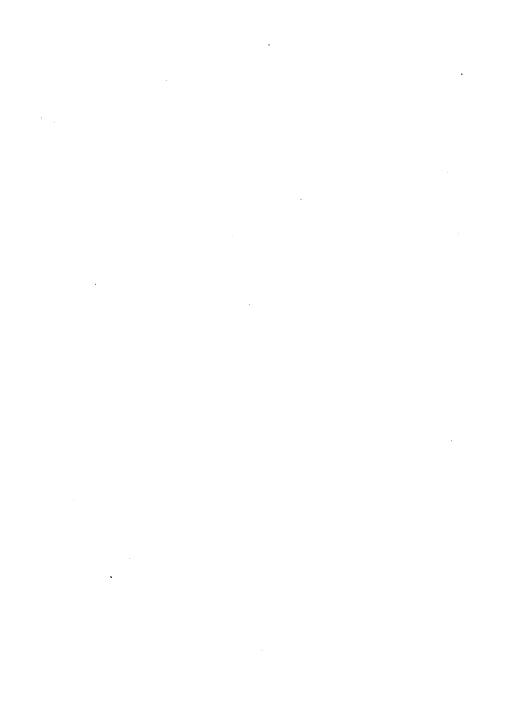
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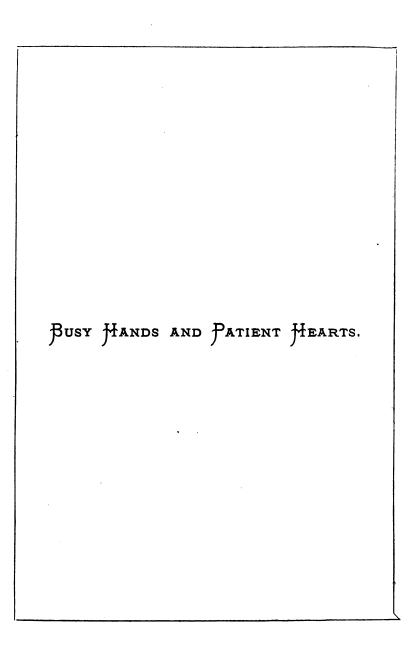




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STORIES FROM GERMANY.

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GOLD-SEEKERS AND BREAD-WINNERS.
By FRANZ HOFFMAN.

II.

THE COBBLER, THE CLERK, & THE LAWYER OF LIEBSTEIN.

TRANSLATED BY ANNIE HARWOOD.

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FRONTISPIECE.

p. 24.

BUSY HANDS

AND

PATIENT HEARTS:

OR,

The Blind Boy of Dresden and his Friends.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF GUSTAV NIERITZ

BY

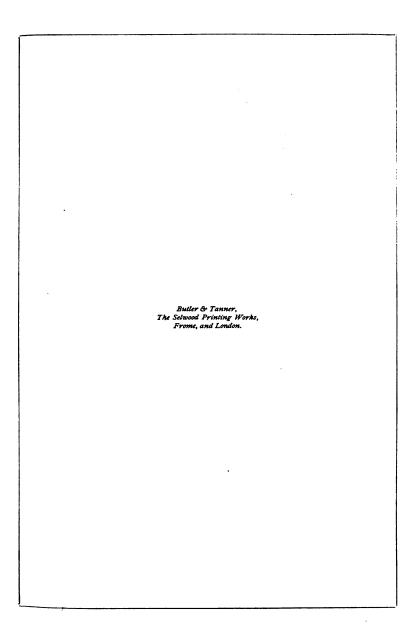
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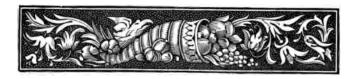
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CHAPTER I.

The Little Maid.

"Thou wast out by times, thou busy, busy bee."

"OLD is gathered in the morning," says the German proverb; and so thought the good people of Dresden, where Master Tanzer the Potter lived. In this golden morning hour our story opens upon him, as he sits at breakfast with his men.

"Now, lads, up and to work!" said he, as the last mouthful of coffee and bread disappeared. He rose as he spoke, and they all followed him into the adjoining workshop, where the turning-wheels soon began to spin under their busy fingers.

There was silence for a time; then Master Tanzer said, "Who is that rattling at the door? Can't you come in?" he went on, almost impatiently, as the latch rose and fell again and again, and still the door did not open. He was just going to rise from his seat to open it himself, when a little girl stepped in, made a shy curtsey, and remained standing.

It had not yet struck five, and the child could not be more than ten years old; but her fair hair was smoothly combed, her shoes brushed, and every part of her poor dress clean and tidy. Her cheeks and hands glowed with the rosy redness that comes from a good washing in cold water.

Master Tanzer noticed all this with quiet satisfaction, and with a kind smile he said to the child, "Well, my little one, up so early this morning? Your mother has taught you that 'the early bird gets the worm,' eh? Well, you are a brave little lass, and as blooming as a rosebud in the morning dew. Now then, what have you got for me? Do you want me to buy something?"

The child did not answer, but looked gravely down into her gathered-up apron, and at length very carefully drew out the two pieces of a broken china cup. "I wanted to ask you, sir," she said, half crying, "if you could mend this cup for me? but so that no crack may be seen."

Tanzer looked at the pieces; they were of good china, and beautifully painted with flowers. "So that no crack shall be seen? Well, that's not so easy; but we'll try, my lass;" and so saying, he put the pieces on one side, and set himself to his turning-wheel again.

"Oh, dear sir," said the child imploringly, "couldn't you be so good as to mend it for me now? I will wait ever so long."

The potter and his men laughed. "It would be a long while, indeed, you would have to wait," said Master Tanzer. "The cup can't be cemented without being put into the fire. It will be three days before I am baking pottery, and five days, at least, before you can have your cup."

The child looked into his face, with tears in her eyes. "Aha! now I understand your being up so early," said he; "you wanted to have the cup mended, and all before mother got up, so that she might know nothing about it, eh? Is that it? Well, never mind, surely you have a kitten, or a dog, or a little squirrel at home, that might bear the blame of the broken cup."

The child lifted her eyes with such an astonished look, that Tanzer said directly, "God forbid I should teach you to tell a lie, my lass. It was only fun. Nay, nay, tell your mother all the truth; will you? That's the best way."

The child nodded, as if it was quite a matter of course, and went away. Next morning, about the same time, she came again. "I told you," said Master Tanzer, knitting his brows, "that you could not have your cup in less than five days."

"I have not come for that, sir," answered the little one; "I have brought you something else to mend." She drew the pieces of a dark brown jar out of her apron.

Master Tanzer and his men laughed again. "Nothing can be done with that," said he, at last. "You think because it is glazed, it is made of china; but it is nothing but a piece of earthenware, and can't be mended. What would become of us, I wonder, if such things as that could be put together again? We should have to shut up shop, or eat bread without any butter. Throw the pieces away!"

The child turned pale. "The jar was not ours," she said, "it belonged to some one who sent us some broth in it."

"I am sorry," said Tanzer; "but you should have been more careful with other people's things."

"It was not I," said the child; "mother let it fall, because the rhumatism is so bad in her hands that she cannot hold anything tight. Have you any jars to sell, sir? and what would one like this cost?"

Tanzer was touched: "I have plenty," said he, "but mine are dearer than common ones, I can tell you." He fetched one from his store-room, and was just going to make a present of it to the child, when he caught sight of a little paper packet peeping out of her apron. "What have you got there?" he asked, curiously.

"It is birdseed for our Bright-eye," said the little one, simply.

"Oh, birdseed, indeed!" said Mr. Tanzer; and he put the intended present back on the shelf, and sat down to his wheel. "I had nearly made a fool of myself," he said, when the child was gone. "If people can afford to keep birds, they can pay for their jars. I don't get them for nothing. That is just the way;—people are 'so poor, so poor;' and when you come to look into it, they keep birds, and dogs, and cats, and nobody knows what else. No such beggars for me."

The master had not got over his anger about the birdseed, when, four days after, the child came to fetch her cup. The breakage was hardly to be seen, and Tanzer asked the usual price for mending—sixpence. The child felt in all the corners of her pocket over and over again; but no more than fourpence would come out, for there was no more there. "There is twopence short," she said at last, and handed the rest, shyly, to the master.

"Well, you can take the cup," he said, "and bring me the twopence as soon as ever you can."

The child turned away sadly. "Well, I'm free of her, at any rate," said Tanzer; "she will never cross my threshold again, sure enough."

But in two days there she was again, with the money in her hand. Tanzer was astonished. "Well done, little one," said he; "I see you are an honest child. You had no need to bring it me; I did not know your name, or where to find you. Who are you? What are your parents? Where do you live?"

"We live at No. 27, Weaver's Lane. My father is dead; he was a painter. My name is Magda Tube."

"Your father was a painter, eh? And you can paint, too, I dare say; and better than my 'prentice there, who can think of nothing but eating and sleeping, instead of painting the mugs and writing rhymes for the plates and dishes." The boy seized his brush, and blushed scarlet as Magda looked at his work.

"Let's hear what the lazybones has been writing," said Tanzer to the child. "Can you read?" Without answering, Magda took up a plate and read,

[&]quot;Pancakes, puffs, and apple pasties,— Well I know how good your taste is."

"I believe you there, my boy," said Tanzer, laughing. "What next, Magda?" On the next plate was written,—

"With a fresh laid egg, and a slice of ham, Who can tell how happy I am?"

"The boy can think of nothing but feeding," said Tanzer.
"I will bet anything the third is on the same subject."

"Come, all you birds and fishes, You'll make us dainty dishes,"

read Magda.

"Did not I say so?" said the master; "the boy thinks because the plates are to hold eatables, they must not speak of anything else. Are there no better rhymes than these, lad? Have you never heard—

'When the cat's away, The mice will play;'

or--

'You, nor I, nor nobody knows

How oats, peas, beans, and barley-corn grows?'

Now for the fourth plate, Magda;" as he saw the boy anxiously trying to keep this one out of sight. It ran,—

"When I for myself can forage, I'll dine no more off porridge."

This was more than the good-natured master could stand. "How now, youngster?" he cried; "you dare to despise the porridge, which is much too good for such a good-

for-nothing as you. I'll send you off; I'll have nothing more to do with you. Here, Magda, you come and shame him; paint something for me on this mug, and write me a rhyme."

Blushing, Magda obeyed. However badly she had done it, Tanzer would certainly have praised her, to spite the boy; but her father had taught her when she was a very little child, and with a firm and skilful hand she painted a pretty blue pattern on the white earthenware, and wrote—

"Who feeds the ravens when they cry Will all my daily wants supply."

Without speaking a word the master went into his store-room, and bringing out a jar, gave it to the child. "There," said he, "it is well earned. A little one who can work so well may surely be allowed to keep a bird. Will you paint mugs, and write rhymes for me sometimes? I will pay you well."

Was ever a child so happy as Magda? With a beaming face she promised, and then ran joyfully home with her jar.





CHAPTER II.

The Blind Boy.

"Blind! blind! blind!
Oh! sitting in the dark for evermore,
And doing nothing; putting out a hand
To feel what lies about me, and to say,
Not 'This is blue or red,' but 'This is cold,
And this the sun is shining on, and this
I know not, till they tell its name to me.'"

RS. TUBE, Magda's mother, had been lying awake all night, writhing in the agony of rhumatic fever. Only towards morning had she fallen into a gentle

sleep; but then, worn out with pain, she slept so soundly that she never heard the old cock crowing loud from the neighbouring hen-house. But he woke Magda, and as softly as possible she crept out of bed. It was still pitch dark in the room; but she could find her things, for they were all laid together in one corner. She slipped them on, and then stealing noiselessly out of the house, ran across the yard to the pump, at which she washed her hands, face, and neck.

Hearing her mother still breathing quietly when she came in again, she knelt down to say her morning prayer.

Then she took out her stocking, and knitted away busily till a faint glimmer of day stole through the darkened window.

This was the signal for Magda to put by her work. With the help of a small tinder-box she now began to light a little fire in the stove, to prepare the breakfast.

"It smokes, Magda," said her mother, as she woke up coughing.

"Good morning, dear mother," said Magda, cheerfully: "the wood is rather damp, and the stove full of cracks; but I will see if I cannot alter it directly."

She fetched a little lime, which she kept at hand in a saucer, and tried to plaster over the cracks through which the smoke was creeping.

"Raise me, Magda," said her mother.

Magda bent over her. Her mother clasped both her arms round the child's neck; and, putting forth all her strength, Magda lifted her up. She was propping her up with pillows, when the sick woman said fretfully,—

"Where does that dreadful draught come from, just in my neck? Is the window open, Magda?"

"Ah! I see what it is," said Magda, looking round; "the paper has blown away from the broken pane, mother. I will make a better screen than that, though;" and in a minute she had covered up the hole with an old oil painting, which seemed lying on the window-sill for the purpose.

"Is the coffee ready, Magda?"

"It won't be long, mother dearest. And just hear what

good fortune I have had. I have got a whole jar full of beef bones, so that I can make you some good strong broth to-day; and the cook at the hotel has promised to give me all the coffee-grounds, if I will only wash out the coffee bags for her. So we shall have *real* coffee, instead of our drink of barley and beet-root."

"What are you going about barefoot for, Magda? You will certainly take cold on those stones. Why can't you put on your shoes?"

"Don't be angry, mother; they are rather down at heel already, and the soles so thin, as thin as paper."

"Oh dear! what is to become of us? Why, they are only just home from the shoemaker's, Magda; and how you are ever to get any more I don't know."

"Never mind about that, mother; why, I'm going to earn money from kind Mr. Tanzer, you know; and the good God has never forsaken us yet."

"We have to wait a long time for His help though, sometimes, Magda, and meanwhile——"

"When the need is sorest the help is surest," whispered Magda; but she could not help looking anxiously at her poor crippled mother, so helpless, so fretted by her suffering.

"Isn't Raphael awake yet?" asked her mother presently.

Just at that moment a scrambling movement was heard in the corner behind the stove, and a little boy only half-dressed crept out into the room, groping his way. Magda went to meet him,—took his face between both her hands, and kissing his forehead, said,

"Good morning, brother."

He returned the kiss, and then said eagerly,—

"What ails Bright-eye? he is not singing, Magda."

"Just because it is too dark for him yet, dear; he never wakes till it is light, you know."

"Always after the bird," said his mother, peevishly, "and not even a 'good morning' for me."

"O mother, I did not know you were awake," he said.
"I had been dreaming that some one had taken Bright-eye away, and I was so afraid it was true. How are you, mother dear?" and he felt for her hand, and kissed it affectionately.

Meantime, Magda had put the mended cup and two little mugs on the table; then out of a little basket she took a twopenny roll.

"The baker's wife, at the corner, gave me this last night," she said, "for helping her little Christy across the street. It is rather stale, certainly; but we can soak it in the coffee;" and she divided it into three equal parts, and poured the hot coffee over it.

"I have some milk too," she said, "and sugar we can do without."

She pushed the table close up to her mother's bedside, and with true contentment they enjoyed their scanty meal.

Think of it, ye rich! who, over your Mocha, chocolate, and gunpowder, are dissatisfied still.

Magda was full of that light-hearted happiness which comes from a sense of duty done; and she chattered away over her breakfast till even her poor mother half forgot her pain. All at once there came a thrilling gush of song from a golden canary in the corner of the room.

"Bright-eye, my Bright-eye!" cried Raphael, delighted.

"The bird gives us a lesson," said his mother; "his first note is a song of praise." And with a feeble, trembling voice she began:—

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

Both the children joined, and devoutly sang through the thanksgiving, accompanied all the time by the trillings of the bird.

It was now pretty light, even in their low, dark room, and Magda sat down with her needle to mend her sadly worn little frock. Raphael began his usual occupation of unravelling threads of silk. The children were silent, for their mother had taken up her Bible; only the bird sang on and on.

After a time they heard heavy footsteps crossing the yard and approaching their room. Some one knocked loudly; almost before Magda could say "Come in," the latch was lifted.

The light in the room was still so dim that the man, coming in from the open air, could not distinguish any objects, and looking round with a puzzled air asked, "Does Mrs. Tube live here?"

"O mother, it is Mr. Tanzer! Good Mr. Tanzer is come to see us," cried Magda, and ran joyfully to meet him.

Mrs. Tube tried to lift herself up in bed, to bid him welcome; but she could not. Raphael had run, as usual, to hide in his own corner behind the stove.

"Why, Magda," said Tanzer, "I thought you must be very ill to leave me in the lurch like this for two whole days. What's the matter, child?"

"O sir," said Magda, much distressed, "I went to the shop, and asked the apprentice to tell you how it was I could not come. Mother has had one of her bad attacks; and I could not leave her, you see, sir."

"The rascal," said Tanzer, "he never told me a word; I'll pay him out for it. But now let me come in. So this is your mother, is it? I am glad to know the good woman who has brought up such a good daughter. Rhumatics, is it, ma'am? A bad complaint indeed. We potters are very subject to it. There we are, in the severest winter weather, obliged to work the clay with our naked feet till it gets soft; it would never stand without. But this is a perfect dog-kennel of a room; the healthiest man could not live here—dark as a cellar, and damp; why the water actually streams down the walls. So cold, too; and yet there is a smell of smoke."

The potter's eye turned in the direction of the stove.

"A fine thing that for a stove!" said he. "It must have been made before the deluge. It is worn through and patched, just like one of my men's leather aprons. I

must speak to the landlord about it. He will think I want to make a job of it; but to let such a hole as this for a dwelling is downright sinful."

And going round to examine the stove, Master Tanzer nearly fell over the poor boy, sitting quite still behind it.

"Hey day! somebody here!" cried he, in astonishment. "Why, my lad, you will ruin your eyes trying to unravel silk in this Egyptian darkness. You will go blind, that you will."

Magda sighed. Her mother said, in a sad voice, "He is blind, sir."

"Bl-bl-blind!" stammered out Tanzer. He dragged the boy half by force to the light.

"Look at me, my lad."

"I cannot see you, sir," said Raphael gently; but lifted his sightless eyes to the speaker's face.

There is something terrible in such looks. The eyes are formed like others, but the reflection of the soul in man is not there. They are living, and yet dead.

The good Tanzer was deeply touched. He turned quickly round, as if to look at the stove again, but really to wipe away the fast-gathering tears.

"What a misfortune!" he said; "and, Magda, you told me nothing of this. Has he been long blind?"

"Ever since he was two years old, sir."

"And how did it happen?"

"We don't know, sir; we only noticed it little by little," said his mother, "and when it was already too late, and the sight nearly gone."

"My poor boy," said Tanzer; "but you can remember how the blue sky looks, and the bright sun, and your mother's face, can't you?"

Raphael shook his head slowly and thoughtfully.

"What! don't you know anything of the beauty of the spring blossoms, and the gay colours of the flowers, and the dazzling white snow? Can't you even fancy the broad river, with the sailing ships going by—the fields full of buttercups and daisies, where the sheep graze—the wood, with its leafy trees—the——"

Mrs. Tube made a sign to the master, who stopped when he saw the shadow creeping over Raphael's face.

"Well, well!" he said, quickly changing his tone, "there are some things in the world that make you happy, though you can't see them, aren't there?"

Raphael's countenance brightened at once.

"Oh yes, sir," he said; "I am happy when mother is pleased with me, and when Magda pets me, and when I eat and drink, and when I lie in my little warm bed, and when my Bright-eye sings."

"Yes, yes," said Tanzer: "you are right, my child; and you are much happier than many other creatures after all. You can hear your little bird sing, and can listen to the music of your mother's and sister's voices; and you can speak too—can say when you want anything—can talk with other people; and if you cannot see the pretty flowers, you can enjoy their sweet scent. Now an oyster, for instance, can do none of these things; it can neither see nor

hear, nor smell, nor taste, and can have very little feeling. It can only clap its shell up and down a little, while you can move a thousand ways with your limbs. If we compare ourselves with creatures that have less to make them happy, not more than we have, we shall always be contented."

But poor Mr. Tanzer felt himself an awkward comforter; so he just pressed a piece of money into the boy's hand, and, taking a friendly leave of the family, went away, followed by their thanks and blessings.





CHAPTER III.

The Hard Landlord.

"To him they are but as the stones
Beneath his feet that lie,
It entereth not his thoughts that they
From him claim sympathy."

MARY HOWITT.



R. TANZER had not been very long gone, when the landlord entered. His brows were knitted angrily, and in a very harsh tone, he said to the

poor woman:---

"How came you to send that ill-bred potter to me? Did I compel you to come here? If my room does not suit you, you are welcome to go. I can get such poor lodgers as you any day. I have only to hold up my finger, and a dozen would be glad enough to come in. As for the stove, it has done very well for thirty years, and I am not going to buy a new one for you. I show you favour enough in letting you have the room at two shillings a week; I used to get three for it."

Frightened at such rough words, Raphael crouched down at the foot of his mother's bed; Magda trembled and dared not speak a word; but Mrs. Tube stretched out her poor crippled arms entreatingly and said, "Indeed, Mr. Duller, I am quite innocent of any annoyance you may have had. I should never have thought of complaining of the room. I know such poor people as we are cannot expect to live like princes. I dare say Mr. Tanzer is used to better stoves than ours, but I am satisfied if only the tiles do not fall on the children's heads."

These words rather pacified the landlord. "Well, if it's Mr. Tanzer's own doing, I'll just teach him to mind his own business," said he. "He has been preaching away to me about your miserable condition, and my duty to you as my tenants. He wants relief for you. Well, I am willing enough that you should have it, I shall be all the more sure of my rent. So you may expect a Poor Inspector to come to inquire into your circumstances; but you had better not let him see that canary bird, I can tell you, if you want to make out a case. Let's see—it's a nice bright little thing, and sings well. I'll give you a couple of shillings for him, and you will be rid of a hungry inmate into the bargain."

At these words poor Raphael could control himself no longer. He burst into loud sobs, and Magda's eyes filled with tears. The landlord had already put out his hand to take the cage, as if the thing was done, when Mrs. Tube, touched by her blind child's distress, said decidedly, "No, Mr. Duller, I cannot sell the bird, sir. He is my poor Raphael's only delight, and I will not take it from him.—Hush, Raphael, my child, do not sob so; Bright-eye shall not go away."

"As you please," said the landlord, angrily. "I offered you help, and if you don't choose to accept it, it is not my fault." And so, muttering to himself, Mr. Duller went his way.

A few hours after, a man entered, who announced himself to be the Poor Inspector for the district. He found the family in very straitened circumstances, and satisfied himself that they had not fallen into distress by any fault of their own. But the bird proved, as Mr. Duller had said, a stone of stumbling. "People in your position," said the Inspector, "dependent on the charity of others, have no right to be keeping pets." He promised, however, to get Magda into a free school. She had not been to school at all since her father's death, because her mother had had no money to spare to pay for her. She was much delighted at the Inspector's proposal, and thanked him heartily.

From that time Magda went regularly to school in the mornings; and in the afternoons, when she was free, she worked for Mr. Tanzer.

So things went on till nearly Christmas, when fresh troubles seemed to gather over the family. Constant illness had prevented Mrs. Tube from doing any work, and what Magda earned was barely sufficient to keep them, especially now the severe weather was coming on. So the joyous Christmas-tide was to Mrs. Tube, as to so many other poor people, a time of much anxiety. The quarter's rent was not ready, and she had good reason to fear that the landlord would not wait. She had no more things of any value to sell; and Magda tried in vain to chase away the brooding cares from her mother's heart.

Master Tanzer was very busy, preparing a number of Christmas gifts for children, and as the gaily painted jars and mugs and plates are always the favourites, Magda's hands were full.

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What was to give pleasure in this way to other children, was to little Magda a source of great delight, because she could earn money by it. She thought, if she worked very hard, she might perhaps earn the quarter's rent, and carry it to her mother as a Christmas present. She could have no chance of doing this, however, unless she took the mornings for her work, as well as the afternoons. But she felt sure her schoolmaster would excuse her, for such a good reason; especially as till now she had only stayed away when she could not possibly leave her mother. She was so eager for her work that she did not even take time to run to the school and tell the master how it was; she thought she could explain it all better afterwards, but she was mistaken, and sadly mistaken, as we shall see.





CHAPTER IV.

Merry Christmas.

"Now he who knows Old Christmas,
He knows a carle of worth;
For he is as good a fellow
As any upon earth.
And ever he loveth the children,
And holiday begs for all,
And comes with his pockets full of gifts,
For the great ones and the small."

WO days before Christmas-day, Magda's work was done. Mr. Tanzer had promised to pay her on Christmas Eve, and probably meant to make her a little present beside her money, for he had invited her to come to his house on that evening, with some other children for whom he had Christmas gifts.

The most industrious and best-behaved children in the free schools were assembled every year at Christmas time, in a large room, where they received very pretty presents. All the rich people in the town contributed to this presentation; and when they saw the delight of the poor children, they found an answering joy in their own hearts which fulfilled the Saviour's words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

This day, the day before Christmas Eve, was fixed for the gathering. Magda knew this. She was not among the number who were to receive presents this time, for she had only been a month or two at the school; but her master had praised her, and told her she would be sure of a reward next year. So she was quite satisfied, and not at all envious. She was only anxious to see as much as she could of the merry doings.

"Do come, Raphael," she said, on the afternoon of the day; "we will go into the market, and then try and get into the hall and see the presents given. It is not good for you to be always sitting still; and if you can't see, you can hear the bells, and the cracking of the sledge-whips, and the cheerful hum of voices, and the singing of the children, and the music of the hand-organs. And I will describe to you just how all the pretty things look on the stalls. There are little windmills that turn when you put sand in from the top; and pyramids of coloured candles, and nut-crackers with funny faces and great wide mouths, and crackers and kisses and sugar men, and lots of things—do come, Raphael."

Mrs. Tube also begged him to go, and at last he slipped his hand into his sister's, and they went out together. The fresh, keen air brought a colour into his pale cheeks; the merry life all around raised his spirits; and a bright smile began to play over his face.

So he walked about the market-place, keeping close to Magda, and listening to all she had to tell him, till she led him away towards the hall where the presents were to be given.

Troops of children headed by their teachers were already marching to the place, their faces beaming with excitement and delight. Presently Magda's own school came by. Many of the girls nodded kindly to her, and one just stepped aside from the line to whisper, "Magda, is it true that you have stayed away wilfully six days from school? A boy has told the master so, and he is very angry."

Before Magda could answer, the child had slipped back to her place. Magda felt cut to the heart. Who could have accused her so falsely? So far as she knew, she had not made any enemies. (Ah, she did not know that there are some whose eye is always evil because others are good.) She longed to go and clear herself to her teacher, and looked anxiously up to the high windows in which lights now began to appear. Numbers of people in carriages and on foot were streaming towards the room to see the children's festival. But the policeman at the door would not let Magda and her blind brother go in.

To Raphael, who could see nothing, the time seemed long, and the cold pierced him, unaccustomed as he was to being out much. He blew on his frozen fingers, and swung first his right leg and then his left, to warm his feet. Magda, seeing how cold he was, took off her little woollen apron and wrapped it round his chest, so that he could tuck his hands in it.

A fruit-woman close by noticed her doing this, and said kindly, "Are you cold, my dears? A pity you can't get into the room with the rest. Has the little boy any warm

gloves to put on? Come here, my lad, and warm your hands by my little charcoal stove."

Very glad of the invitation, Magda led her brother to the fruit stall, and taking his hands held them to the stove.

"Can't the little one see well?" asked the woman.

"Not at all," said Magda; "he is blind."

The kind woman shuddered. "Poor child, poor child," she exclaimed, clasping her hands, "what a pity now!" and with that sympathy so ready among the poor, she looked on her stall for something to give the blind boy.

"Here," she said, and put into each of Raphael's hands a nice warm roasted apple, "that will keep off hunger and cold, too, for a bit. God give thee a merry Christmas, child." She gave two more apples to Magda, and the children went away full of gratitude and pleasure.

Meanwhile it had grown almost dark. In the windows above, countless wax-lights gleamed brighter and brighter among the green boughs of the Christmas-trees. A soft strain of music was borne on the wintry air. At the sound, Raphael forgot cold and care.

Eagerly he turned his face in the direction of the music. His darkened eyes shone with the reflection of the festal lights. And when five hundred clear, sweet children's voices joined the chords of the instrument, and first softly, then swelling louder and louder, sang the angels' song, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men," the blind eyes filled with grateful tears—their silent offering to God.

"Hark, Magda, hark!" he whispered. "Heaven is opened

and the angels are singing their Hallelujah. Oh, if I could only fly away to them, high, high above the earth!"

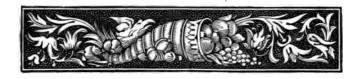
- "And leave mother and me here alone," said Magda, sadly.
- "No, no," said Raphael; "I would often fly up and down."
- "And what would become of Bright-eye?" said Magda.
- "Oh yes, I forgot," said Raphael quickly. "No, don't be afraid, I will not fly away."

"You can't," said Magda, laughing, "that's certain; but mother will be frightened if we stay much longer. When the children have done singing, we had better go home, Raphael."

They had much to tell their mother when they got back; all about the kind fruit-woman and everything they had heard and seen.

But Raphael dreamed all night of singing angels, and that he was up with them and could fly.





CHAPTER V.

A Sad Surprise.

"Oh, never let us lightly fling
A barb of woe to wound another;
Oh, never let us haste to bring
A cup of sorrow to a brother."

ERY early next morning Magda went to Master Tanzer's, to help carry his goods to the Christmas fair. She had been backwards and forwards several

times, when Tanzer's apprentice said to her with a spiteful grin on his face, "I say, a policeman has just been here, asking for you."

Magda turned pale; in an instant she thought of her absence from school,* and the whisper of the little girl to her the day before. "For me?" she said, in a trembling voice.

"Yes," answered the boy; "the man said he would soon find you."

It was true enough. When Magda arrived the next time with her heavily-packed basket at Master Tanzer's stall, the policeman was there, waiting for her. "Put that down," he said, sternly, "and come with me."

• In many parts of Germany, absence from the Government schools is punishable by fine or imprisonment. These are inflicted on the parent or child, according to circumstances.

Bewildered with terror, Magda could not move, and the woman at the stall and the policeman had to take the basket from her.

"What has the poor child done, that she should be arrested?" said the woman.

"She knows, well enough," answered the man, and led Magda away. Silently, and with her head bent down, she went with him. She could not lift her eyes for very shame to the face which, she felt, were watching her curiously. But she grew paler and paler, and bitter tears stole down her cheeks, as she heard people saying, "The child has been stealing, I suppose. So young, and a thief already!"

Even the policeman was touched with Magda's distress. To take off her attention from the remarks made on her, he said, "Your schoolmaster has reported that you have stayed away from school six days without leave. Does your mother know it? Did she keep you at home? If she did, you shall go free, and I shall take her up instead."

"It was not mother's fault," said Magda, bravely lifting up her head. She would willingly suffer to save her mother; beside, it was quite true that Mrs. Tube was not to blame. The whole plan had been Magda's own, and only on her assurance that the master would certainly consider the reason for her absence sufficient, had her mother given her consent.

The policeman led Magda to the station-house, where she was shown into a pretty large room. Many women and girls were there already, who had been taken up for begging, stealing, drinking, and other offences. They just looked at

the new comer, and then went on with their games and loud boisterous talk. Here and there one was lying on the floor fast asleep. Magda had never been near such women before, and sat down at the farthest corner of the room to escape notice. Even here she could not help hearing some of their coarse words, and rude bursts of laughter. Presently, a girl came to her, and asked her to join in a game, and when Magda refused, jeered at her for her downcast looks. This was more than her full heart could bear; she just hid her face in her little apron, and sobbed quietly, but bitterly. Her grief was not all, or chiefly, for herself; "How frightened dear mother will be about me," she thought; "and poor Raphael,-who will warm their broth for them? Mother can't even cut a bit of bread with her bad hands, much less make a fire and lift the saucepan. They will be so cold, and perhaps have to lie in bed all day. And what if the fright should make mother worse? Oh dear, if I could only let her have the money which Mr. Tanzer paid me this morning; it is no good to me here. And she wanted it so much before Christmas, for the landlord, for he has threatened to turn us out in the street if we do not pay this week. Oh dear, dear! And all this comes of my trying so to help."

And then Magda began to wonder who could have told such an unkind tale of her to her schoolmaster. She was sure he would never have been so severe unless some one had said some very bad things of her. Who could it be? She could not help thinking of Master Tanzer's apprentice; and it was indeed he who had made up a false tale to the

master. He had never liked Magda from the first day she came, because she worked so much better than he did. He could not bear to hear the Master praise her and speak well of her; and now in his spite and envy he had tried to get her into trouble, hoping that he might get a larger Christmas present from Master Tanzer if she was not there to share it.

The hours which flew by so fast when Magda was at work, now dragged along their weary length. She had counted four thousand pulses, and yet one hour was not gone. What an age it seemed! "How many mugs and plates I could have painted in this time;" thought she. "What a blessing work is! I would not be idle for all the world."

At length twelve o'clock struck. The door opened; the dinner of warm broth and bread was brought in, and pewter spoons were given round. Almost all began to eat eagerly. There was a burst of laughter when Magda folded her hands and whispered the grace. The words died away on her lips; and when she had taken one or two spoonfuls of the broth, it seemed to choke her, and she could eat no more. It was better than they often had at home, but she could not eat with such a sad heart; only by the advice of a beggar-woman she took her piece of bread to keep till she was hungry.

The afternoon crept along as slowly as the morning. Magda could not cry any more, the fountain of tears seemed exhausted. She gradually gained a little more courage, and towards dusk went and sat before the iron-barred window,

which looked into the narrow street. Many people were passing, and few went empty handed. Some had baskets of rosy-cheeked apples, other trays of gilded gingerbread, little Christmas trees, boughs of holly, and misletoe. Everything told of happy Christmas gifts and gatherings. Dolls, hoops, rocking-horses, toys of all sorts, were being carried off from the toy-shop at the corner; and out of the bakehouse next door came men with paper caps and floury coats, bearing on their head trays of Christmas cakes, and steaming hot mincepies. Magda did not covet all these nice things; she knew she could only have looked at them, and told her mother and Raphael about them, if she had been free; but to be alone and in prison when other families were gathering so happily round the Christmas hearth, that was what seemed so hard.

It grew darker and darker in the room, and almost every one was crowding round the stove to keep warm, but Magda still stayed by the window. She saw the lights multiplying in almost all the houses, and heard far off a merry shout of children's voices. Then she remembered that to-night she was to have been one of such a happy party of Mr. Tanzer's. This recollection brought the tears again. She cried as though her heart would break, till sleep—the friend of poor troubled children—closed her heavy eyes.



CHAPTER VI.

The Broken Arm.

"Oh, think how hard your lot would be in this dark room confined, Without a single friend to cheer the anguish of your mind:

Severed from every kindred tie, and left alone to weep

O'er perished joys, when every eye is closed in tranquil sleep!

The glorious sunbeams to your heart no cheering light would bring,

But heaviness and gloom would rest on every pleasant thing. If pity to your soul is dear, have pity then on me, Unbar the narrow cage and set your hapless prisoner free."

OOM, boom! went the cannon before daybreak next morning, to usher in Christmas-day, and merry peals rang out from all the belfries in the town.

The sound woke Magda from her uneasy sleep. She started up from the straw on which she had been lying, and rubbed her eyes to see where she was. She soon remembered, as she heard the heavy snorings of the women lying around, and looked up at the barred window. She could not help crying again as the bells rang on their glad Christmas story, for she had so looked forward to this day. It would be a whole holiday, and she had meant to get up very early, make the poor little room look as bright and nice as she could, and then take Raphael to church to hear the

sweet music, and the glad tidings of great joy which the clergyman was sure to preach. And now Raphael and her mother would both have to spend the day alone, and in distress about her. "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," said a soft voice in her heart. "I will call," said Magda, and moving very softly, so as not to wake anybody, she knelt on the straw, and prayed simply and earnestly to her Father in heaven to help the widow and the fatherless.

Then she ate the piece of dry bread she had saved from the day before, and placed herself by the window, to watch the light spreading over the cold, grey sky. All the while her thoughts were busy. If it had not been Christmas, she knew her case might have been heard that day; and when the whole story was known, and she could prove that she had not been a bad little girl, begging or doing mischief in the street instead of going to school, only working honestly, she would have been sent home; but, as it was, she must wait in patience at least one more day. All day Magda kept thinking, "If I had only my stocking to knit, or something to do, it would not seem half so long."

So the next morning, when the gaoler's wife came in with the breakfast, she took courage, and said, "If you please, ma'am, would you let me help you with your work, if you have any to do? I am never used to sitting with my hands before me, and it makes the time seem so long."

The woman looked at her in surprise.

"I've plenty of work," she said, "and should be glad

enough of help, if I dare trust you in the yard. Will you promise me faithfully, now, not to run away?"

Gladly Magda promised. As soon as ever she got out of the stifling room into the sharp, fresh air in the yard, she felt a different creature, and set to work with a will. The woman as she passed in and out of the house, watched her, and presently brought her a nice piece of bread and butter, and said kindly, "It is not the first time you have tried work, I can see. You will make a capital little servant some day. Here eat this, and rest awhile."

Magda thanked her, and had just begun to eat when there was a loud outcry in the street, and several people ran into the yard, speaking loudly.

"It is a shame," said one voice, angrily.

"Abominable," said another. "Another child run over," he added, turning to a policeman in the yard.

"What business has the boy about by himself?" said a third; "he is blind."

Magda caught the words. In an instant she had thrown down the bread, and was in the midst of a knot of men just as the crowd opened to make way for poor Raphael, who was being led by two men. His face was pale as death; his right arm hung limp by his side; his lips were pressed tightly together.

"Raphael, my own Raphael!" cried Magda, in a tone of agony. At the familiar sound a faint smile passed over the blind boy's face. As soon as he felt his sister by his side, he put his left arm close round her, and, laying his head

on her shoulder, sobbed out, "O Magda, Magda, mother will die, and Bright-eye and I shall die of grief."

"But tell me, dear," said Magda, "how did you come here? and have you really been run over?"

"Why, mother had been crying about you all day long and all night, and she wanted to come here herself to see you, but she couldn't; and all Bright-eye's food was gone yesterday morning; and though we gave him a few bread-crumbs, he wouldn't sing, and just sat still on the end of his perch, as if he was going to die; and I couldn't bear it any longer, so I came out myself to find you. I kept along by the houses all right at first, but just when I was crossing the street a cart came round the corner and knocked me down, and went over my arm. Oh! I hope mother won't scold me about it."

Magda shuddered as she looked at the poor crushed arm.

"Poor boy! But doesn't it hurt you very much?"

"Yes, of course," said Raphael; "but if you will only come home, and Bright-eye does not die, I can bear the pain."

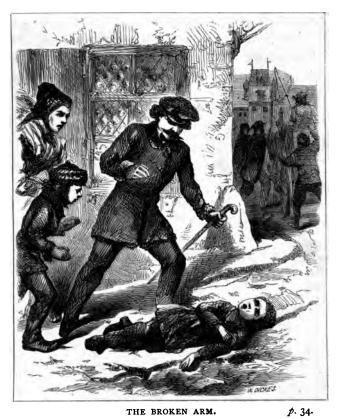
"The boy must be attended to at once," said a bystander; "the arm is swelling already."

"He must be taken to the hospital," said another.

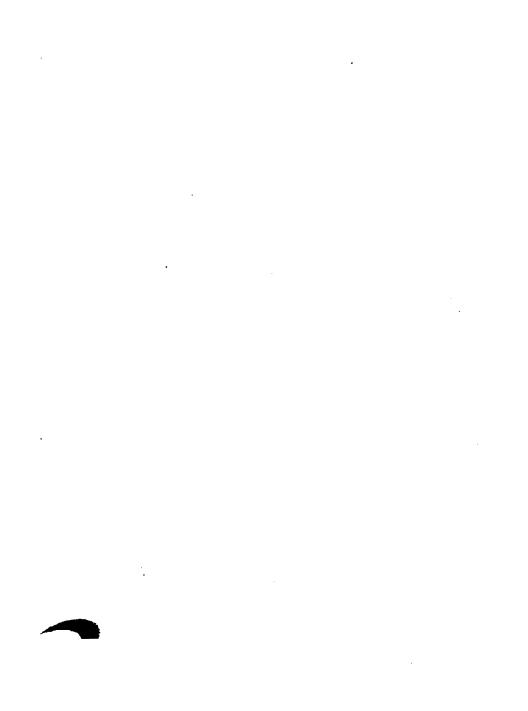
"Oh, no, no," said Raphael, clinging, in his terror, still closer to Magda. "I must stay with Magda, and my mother, and Bright-eye."

"Hush, dear," said Magda; "I will go with you."

"That won't do," said the gaoler; "you have not been tried yet; and your brother cannot stay here any longer." So saying, he tried to free her from Raphael's arm. The



THE BROKEN ARM.



boy gave a piercing cry, and would not be separated from his sister.

A murmur of sympathy ran through the crowd. Just then a gentleman stepped forward, and in a gentle, firm voice, said to Raphael, "Do not be alarmed, my child; you shall only have your arm set in the hospital, and then go home as soon as possible. In a few hours your sister will be released, and she can come to you. I will go to your mother and tell her what has happened."

"But my Bright-eye?" said Raphael.

"I will take him a can full of seed," answered the kind voice. Raphael now seemed satisfied, and said earnestly, "Thank you a thousand times, dear, good sir."

The gentleman went to fulfil his promise. Meanwhile a cab had been brought, and Raphael was placed in it. Magda followed him to the gate, and there, with a flood of tears, bade him good-bye, and went back to her work.





CHAPTER VII.

A bery Bark Bay.

"But now, ay now, she sitteth dumb and still;
No food, no comfort—cold and poverty
Bearing her down;
My heart is sore for her.
How long, how long? When troubles come of God
. . . then nought behoves
Like patience; but for troubles wrought of men
Patience is hard—I tell you it is hard."

ITH difficulty poor Mrs. Tube had got up and dressed herself, and was sitting in an old arm-chair, her eyes all red and swollen with weeping for Magda,

when the unknown gentleman stepped in and told her of Raphael's accident. This was the worst trouble of all—the poor mother was too overpowered to speak, and felt that she could bear suspense no longer. Hardly knowing what she did, she searched round the room till she found the handle of an old broom, and, taking this between her crippled hands, set out for the hospital. In her distress she never thought of taking the door-key. The kind gentleman returned in a few minutes with the promised food for Bright-eye, and finding the door open and the room empty, he thought the best thing

he could do was to lock it up, and take the key to the landlord. On his way home he overtook Mrs. Tube, still creeping painfully along towards the hospital. Gentleman as he was, not too proud to give her his arm, and help her to the gates, where, by using his authority, he gained her admission.

Raphael was already there, sitting in an arm-chair, waiting for the surgeon. As soon as he heard his mother's voice, he begged her not to be angry with him for having been so careless. She could not trust herself to answer, she only stroked his face lovingly, and kissed his white cheeks. In a few minutes the surgeon came; he immediately cut off the sleeve of Raphael's jacket and shirt, and examined the poor bleeding arm. It was already so swollen and inflamed that leeches had to be applied before the bone could be set. When this was to be done, one or two young men came up to hold Raphael, and to help to bring the broken pieces of bone properly together. It was of course a very painful operation, and though he pressed his lips together as tightly as he could, the poor boy could not help uttering many a sigh and groan and cry of anguish, which pierced his mother's heart. At length the splints were put on, and the arm bound up. The greatest pain was now over, and Raphael sank back exhausted on his little bed and slept; his mother sat beside him watching.

As the doctor feared, he became restless towards morning, talked in his sleep, and threw his arms about so wildly that he was in danger of injuring the broken limb. After a time, however, the fever subsided, and he slept again quietly. His mother was now told that she must leave.

Worn out, and exhausted with long fasting and want of rest, Mrs. Tube with great difficulty made her way to her own door; it was locked, and only now did she remember that in her distress the day before, she had come away without the key. She thought some one might have taken it to the landlord, and went to him for it. He seemed much astonished to see her, and said that as they had all suddenly disappeared, and no one knew what had become of them, he thought the best thing he could do was to let the room, especially as they had not paid their rent. So he had given possession to a fruit-seller and his wife, and Mrs. Tube had better look elsewhere.

"And what has become of my goods?" asked the poor woman in dismay.

"Oh, as to your few bits of things, I've sent them to the auctioneer to pay the rent you owe me," said the landlord.

"O God, forsake me not utterly!" cried the poor woman, wringing her hands. "My children are gone, and now my home too; all things are against me. Do you really mean to turn me out into the street this bitter night?" she said, turning once more to the landlord.

"You have no need to stay in the street unless you choose," said he; "you can get a bed for twopence at the lodging-house in Paradise Row. Here, I'll even stand a night's lodging for you myself, that you may not say I am hard," he went on, holding out twopence to her.

Without answering, Mrs. Tube turned away from his cruel charity. As she went down the street, Master Tanzer's apprentice met her, and said—

"My master won't want to see any more of Magda, I can tell you. He has had to go up before the magistrate about her to-day, and once is enough for that sort of thing."

Mrs. Tube's heart was so full already that she hardly noticed his unkind words. She went first to the police-station, and found that Magda would not be released till the following morning. She knew she would not be allowed to spend another night in the hospital, so in despair she turned her steps to the lodging-house which the landlord had named in Paradise Row. A number of men and women were standing round the door, all, as Mrs. Tube could see from their manner and dress, of the poorest and lowest class. Presently the landlord appeared, carrying a lantern and a large bunch of keys.

"Come on," said he, in a rough voice, and led the way up a steep wooden staircase. On a little landing at the top he stopped, and showing a ladder which led up to the garrets and attics, placed himself at the bottom to take the money from his lodgers before they passed up. Mrs. Tube came last. In a vain hope she felt again and again to the bottom of her pocket, then she said—

"I have no money, sir; will you trust me?"

"No trust here," said he gruffly, and was just removing the ladder, when a woman called from above—

"Give him something in pledge; he'll take that."

Mrs. Tube took off her clean print-apron and offered it to the man. He took it, looked at it with his lantern, then just nodded, and put back the ladder. With great pain and difficulty Mrs. Tube clambered up, and at the top found herself in a little room so low that she could not stand upright. Feeling about in the darkness she found a little straw pallet, on which she lay down with no other covering than the clothing she had on. Very hard and poor her own little bed had sometimes seemed to her aching limbs, but what luxury compared to this: had she needed such a lesson to make her thankful?

So the night passed over Mrs. Tube in the wretched lodging-house; Raphael in the hospital; Magda still in prison.

Had God forgotten Magda's prayer?





CHAPTER VIII.

The Auction.

"Come, tell me now, sweet little bird,
Who decked thy wings with gold;
Who fashioned so thy tiny form,
And bade thy wings unfold?
Who taught thee such enchanting power
To soothe this aching heart;
And with thy note of harmony
To mock the reach of art?"



GOING, a-going, who wishes to buy? Lot 27," shouted the auctioneer; "A padlock and keys. Now then, who bids? Make haste and bid, gentlemen.

The lock is good, and cost a shilling at the very least. What will you bid?"

"Threepence," said a voice in the crowd.

"Threepence," said the auctioneer, lifting up his hammer.

"Going for threepence, gentlemen; a first-rate padlock and key; would shut up any chattering mouths at home, so that you would have no more trouble with them. No one bid any more? Going, going:—4gone!"

Just as this was passing, Magda entered the room, leading Raphael, his arm still bound up in a sling. They stood timidly

at the door, till Raphael said, softly, "Magda, lead me up close to Bright-eye, that I may bid him good-bye." She did so, and lifted up a corner of the cloth with which the cage was covered.

"Speak to him!" she whispered.

Raphael gave a short, very low whistle, with which he used to call the bird.

"Chip, chip!" answered Bright-eye directly.

"Leave that alone!" said the auctioneer, and Magda let the cloth fall in a moment; but Raphael kept feeling the cage with his hands, and sighing. Presently the bird was put up for sale.

"Lot 42. A canary bird and cage," shouted the man. "A splendid little creature; yellow as gold; sings like a nightingale! Now then, who bids?"

Every word that the auctioneer said cut like a knife to Magda's heart; with a trembling hand she felt in her pocket.

"Raphael," she whispered; "I have one shilling left—be bold, and bid sixpence; perhaps they will let you have it out of pity."

"Sixpence to begin with," said the man. "Now then, gentlemen!"

"Sevenpence!" said another voice.

"Eightpence!" cried Raphael.

"Tenpence!" from a boy near the door.

"A shilling!" cried Raphael, in an agony of hope and fear. His voice was so eager that many turned to look at the boy. There he stood, with his pale face, his sightless



THE AUCTION.

p. 42.



eyes, his arm in a sling, and his whole body trembling with excitement. Next him was Magda; her hands clasped, and her blue eyes overflowing with tears.

There was silence for a minute. One or two asked who the children were, and where they came from; others knew something of their story. All were moved with pity for the blind boy, and no one would outbid him.

"Going for a shilling!" said the auctioneer. "Going: gone!" The hammer fell, and once more the bird was Raphael's.

With hands trembling with pleasure, Magda counted out the money, which was the last of what Master Tanzer had paid her. But Raphael could not contain his joy; he clasped the birdcage with both arms, and held it to his breast as if it was a priceless treasure. He sobbed with delight, and tears of sympathy gathered in many eyes as they watched him. The sale could hardly go on till they had left the room; then the rest of poor Mrs. Tube's things were put up, and among them the old oil painting which had served them so well as a screen for the broken window. It had become so indistinct from use and exposure that all that could be made out was a man with a long beard.

"Lot 55," called out the auctioneer. "An old oil painting, without frame; what will you bid?"

"Threepence!" cried a boy.

"Threepence, first bid," repeated the man; "an oil painting going for a mere song. Only threepence, gentlemen!" Then lifting up his hammer, "Who has it?"

"I," said the little boy, delighted to get such a large picture for so little money; but, before the hammer fell, a gentleman who had just entered, and caught sight of the picture, said, "Five shillings!"

The boy's countenance fell. The new bidder asked to have the picture closer to look at it. He examined it carefully; breathed on it; then wiped the dust from the face with a silk handkerchief. This excited the attention of a picture-dealer present; he also asked to look at the painting, and offered ten shillings. To the great amusement of the bystanders these two now bid against each other, till the picture was struck down to the first bidder, for £5 10s.

"I congratulate you," said the other, "on your bargain. The picture is a good one, beyond a doubt; you may sell it again for twice as much."

The stranger laid down the money, and walked away with his purchase.





CHAPTER IX.

A Friend in Peed, a Friend indeed.

"Oh, sweeter than the sweetest flower
At evening's dewy close,
The will, united with the power,
To succour human woes!"

T was a poor little home indeed to which the children carried back Bright-eye in triumph from the sale. There were a few chairs in it, a table, and some articles of clothing, which the magistrate had allowed Mrs. Tube to recover before the sale of her goods; but wood, bread, candles, soap, cooking utensils, there were none left.

Almost all Magda's little earnings had gone in paying the costs of her imprisonment, the charge for Raphael's being taken to the hospital, and a week's rent in advance for the new room. The rest was soon used up in buying the few things really necessary for herself and her mother, before Raphael came out of the hospital, and the very last shilling went, as we have seen, for the canary.

Now what was to be done? there was the bird indeed; but there was no food for him, or for themselves.

"I am afraid you did a foolish thing after all, children,

in spending that last shilling for Bright-eye," said Mrs. Tube; "he will only die of hunger here. You should have been more thoughtful, my children. Raphael, I am afraid your heart is too much set upon the little thing," she went on, as the boy, his face pressed close against the cage, continued his low whistling conversation with the bird.

"O mother, I am so glad he has it," said Magda; "and we are so happy all together again now! I will go out and see if I cannot get some food somewhere, presently; but I do so want, first of all, to go to my schoolmaster, and tell him myself that I did not stay away from school willingly. May I?" "Very well," said her mother, and Magda hastened out. In half an hour she sprang in again, with a face full of delight.

"Mother, mother, it is all right! I have told him all about it, and he will not believe those wicked stories that Tanzer's boy told him any more; and just see, mother, what he has given me!"

She drew something out of her apron, and carefully unfolding the paper, displayed a beautiful new Bible, bound in morocco; her eyes danced with pleasure as her mother admired it.

"O Raphael!" said Magda, "how many pretty stories I will read you now out of my own Bible!"

"May God's blessing come with His word," said Mrs. Tube, reverently. These grave words made the children silent for a minute or two; then Magda wrapped the book in paper again, and said—

"Mother, I should like to run to Master Tanzer's, and speak to him myself. I hardly believe that what the boy said to you was true, and that Master Tanzer will not have me to work again. I should like to ask him;" so off she went. In a little while her voice was heard again outside, saying—

"Open the door, mother!" As soon as it was opened, she entered with a great bundle in her arms.

"God is sending His blessing, indeed!" exclaimed Mrs. Tube, as Magda began to unpack the parcel. Out came a large home-made cake, apples, nuts, gingerbread, candles, woollen stockings and gloves, a knitted woollen jacket, an apron, and three bright new shillings.

"All from my good Master Tanzer!" said Magda, almost sobbing with joy. "It wasn't a bit true, mother, what the apprentice said. The master has been in the country till yesterday on business, and when he came back he could not find us. He had kept my Christmas present for me, and here it is, and I may go to work again for him whenever I can. Here, Raphael, you must be glad too; we will all share together!" And putting her arm round the blind boy's waist, she made him dance round the room with her in her delight.

Their games were suddenly brought to a stop, however, by a knocking of many fingers at once at the door. The winter sun had already set, and it was almost dark in the little room. Their faces fell as the door opened; they felt sure it must be some fresh messenger of bad tidings coming

to spoil all their pleasure; but they were mistaken. Five children were peeping shyly in at the door-way—three girls and two boys—the youngest of whom might be four, and the eldest thirteen years old. Half frightened, they all remained standing at the entrance, as if they were waiting for somebody. Mrs. Tube and Magda looked at them in astonishment.

The three little girls were all dressed alike, in dark blue frocks, and brown cloth mantles, with little swan's-down boas round their throats, showing off their bright rosy cheeks. Behind them stood a servant-maid, with what seemed to be a very heavy basket in her hand.

"Now, then," she said to the children, "aren't you going in?"

The eldest boy took courage, and stepping up to Raphael, who was trying as usual to hide himself, he put a nice warm fur cap on his head, and hung a pair of new boots fastened together, over his arm. His brother followed, and gave as his present to the blind boy, a little jacket and waistcoat and pair of trowsers, which had been worn, but were still quite good. It was now the little girls' turn, and the eldest gave Mrs. Tube a nice new flannel petticoat, while the two little ones put into Magda's hands a frock, a neck-handker-chief, and a pair of shoes. All this was done in silence, the children were too shy, and Mrs. Tube, Magda, and Raphael too overpowered to speak. At length the servant said, "Why you are all as still as the grave, and the room pretty nearly as dark! We must have some light if we are to see any of these things;" so saying, she opened her basket, and taking

out a pound of candles and a candlestick, struck a light. The light seemed to dispel the shyness of the party.

Mrs. Tube helped the maid to unpack her load, and it would have been hard to say whether the faces of the poor children or the rich, beamed the brightest, as one thing after another came out of the wonderful basket. There was one packet of coffee, which filled the room with its pleasant smell, another of sugar, another of tea; then bags of rice, oatmeal, sago; a large loaf, a little pot of butter, a beautiful piece of beef; three new pewter spoons, three pairs of knives and forks; one or two saucepans, cups, plates, and dishes; a few dusters and towels, and some soap. Poor Mrs. Tube grew almost giddy at the sight; at last she said, "Indeed you have made a mistake, these things cannot all be for me."

The children looked at one another and laughed. "They are all yours, Mrs. Tube," said the girl; "our children have talked of nothing else ever since Christmas but the pleasure of taking you by surprise in this way."

- "But who am I to thank?" said the poor woman.
- "May I come in, Mrs. Tube?" asked a voice at the door, "do you allow visitors to-night?" and a tall gentleman, with a lady on his arm, entered the room.
- "Papa! mamma!" cried the children, and clustered round the new-comers, who spoke kindly to Mrs. Tube, Magda, and Raphael.
- "How are you now, Mrs. Tube?" said the gentleman. "You had a sad time of it at Christmas—I hope the New Year will open more brightly for you."

Mrs. Tube thought she had seen the face of the speaker before, and now she remembered that he was the same gentleman who had helped her to the hospital. Magda also recognised him, and the blind boy knew his voice directly he spoke. All surrounded their kind benefactor, and thanked him as best they could for his goodness. He would not have any thanks, however.

"It has been my children's delight to get all these things together," he said. "Isn't it so, children? and is it not better to give than to receive?"

"Oh, yes, papa!" they said, "we have never been so happy in our lives as to-night!"

"Least of all, such a time as this, can we forget the example of Him who 'though He was rich, for our sakes became poor,'" he continued to Mrs. Tube. "I have told your sad story in the daily paper, and asked my fellow-townsmen to help me in a good work. Contributions are coming in, and I hope we shall be able to keep you above want for a while. The day after to-morrow you will receive a load of coals and wood; my servant shall bring you some presently to last in the meantime." While Mr. Gloaming was speaking, he made a sign to his wife to look at Raphael; the boy was first stroking his soft furcap against his cheek, then putting his one arm into his new boots, and feeling them all over.

"Now, children, we must be going," he said; "it is time for poor Mrs. Tube, and for some little people whom I know, to be at rest. Well, has it been a happy New Year's Eve, children? Would you like to spend the next in the same way?—I thought so! Now, good-night Mrs. Tube and Magda and Raphael; a Happy New Year to you all!" As Mrs. Tube lighted them out of the door, he slipped some money into her hand.

Great joy is as exhausting as great sorrow. When they were all gone, the poor widow sank down in her chair, quite overcome; her head was dizzy, her eyes swimming. After resting a little while to recover herself, she said in a trembling voice—

"Come, my children, let us kneel down, and thank the Lord, for He is indeed good, and His mercy endureth for ever. He feeds the young ravens when they cry, and He has heard us in our distress. We were brought low, and He helped us; He will not refuse our thank-offering." The children knelt, and sweeter than clouds of incense rose to God the heartfelt thanksgivings of the widow and the fatherless. The Lord lifted upon them the light of His countenance, and gave them peace.

Both the children had been long asleep before Mrs. Tube could compose herself enough to lie down. Before getting into bed, she gently stooped over Raphael to kiss him. "I would give all this, and how much more," she sighed, "if it would purchase thee thy sight again, my boy!"

It was just striking twelve. The old year, with its care and sorrow, was numbered with the past; a new year had opened, and with how much of mercy!

"Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass," was the widow's last thought as she fell asleep.



CHAPTER X.

The Rew Pear.

"In the bosom, joy and grief
Ever cling together;
Hours of trouble, days of pleasure,
Come like April weather.
Trust in Him who hangs the bow
On the shower glancing;
If we firmly bear our sadness,
He will turn our grief to gladness
In the days advancing."

HERE was yet one more pleasant surprise to come to Mrs. Tube with the New Year's morning.

Owing to the price given for the old picture, the sale of her goods had realized so much more than was expected, that there was nearly £5 to be handed over to her, after paying the landlord and the expenses of the auction. The family were thus raised above that pressure of immediate want which had weighed on them so long. But money cannot do everything, it cannot buy that most precious of all possessions—health. Now that the necessity for exertion was over, Mrs. Tube began to feel the re-action from the great excitement she had gone through; one of her worst attacks of rhumatic gout came on, and she lay in

her bed more helpless than ever. Poor Raphael's blindness, too, seemed a trouble beyond the hope of relief.

Only Magda was as healthy and lively as a fish in fresh water. Always active, busy, cleanly, good-tempered, she seemed to know neither ache nor pain, and spent all the energies of her young, strong nature in trying to soothe her mother's sufferings and sweeten her brother's lot. In such services of love, she found her Bible a great help. She would read over and over again to her mother its words of hope and strong consolation; and Raphael never wearied of its beautiful stories of miracle and blessing. Especially he loved to hear of the healing of the blind; he would sit close to Magda while she read, with his face wonderingly raised to hers to catch every word.

"O Raphael," she would say sometimes, "if Jesus were only on earth now, and would open your eyes, I would walk all the way to Jerusalem to find Him, and entreat Him to come!"

"No, indeed, mother and I would never let you do that; and I don't think He would need to come; I believe He could heal me with a word, and could do it now in heaven just as well as on earth, if He pleased. But never mind, dear; I do not know what seeing is, so I can never tell what I miss. What can it be to see, Magda?"

"Perhaps it is better for you not to know, dear. Indeed, I am not sure that I could quite tell you; for sight is such a curious thing, that, though I have been seeing all my life, I cannot explain it."

"Shall I try and explain it?" said a strange gentleman, who, with Mr. Gloaming, had entered the room unperceived while the children were talking.

Raphael was so startled that he tried at once to escape to his own corner to hide, but Mr. Gloaming would not let him.

"Stay, stay, my boy," he said kindly; "this is a very great physician, who has come with me to see if he can do anything for you and your mother. Do not be frightened; he will not hurt you."

"So you would like to know how people see, would you?" said the physician, kindly, taking a seat and standing the boy between his knees. "Well, even the wisest men hardly know that. There is much that can never be explained about it; but listen, and I will try and tell you a little of this wonderful gift of sight. Now, first of all, if you had a hundred eyes, and no soul, you would not see at all. eye is the little window for the soul; but the soul does not look through the eye as through a pair of spectacles, for two reasons: one, that the eye is not transparent; and another, that the soul does not see, but feel. But, now, if the soul wants to feel anything, it must have that thing near to it. How could the soul feel a wood or a river which is a mile off, and a thousand times larger than the man himself? —it would be purely impossible. So, then, the eye must take a picture of the things which the soul is to see, and bring it so near that the soul can feel it; and to do this the eye is very wonderfully made. It is like a round looking-glass, on which all objects, far and near, are represented. The looking-glass itself is hardly as large as a cherry-stone, yet the largest objects, with all their peculiarities, are pictured exactly upon it: as, for instance, our church, with its fine towers, its many doors, its windows, and stone walls. Now, how many thousand times smaller than it really is, the church must be made to have room in the eye! The cleverest painter in the world could not paint a company of soldiers, with heads, arms, feet, helmets, plumes, guns, swords, and so on, on such a little space as the apple of the eye; but the eye can take in much greater objects than this. I once saw as a great curiosity a cherry-stone, on which were cut forty-five men's faces; but they were so small that I had to use a very strong magnifying-glass to make them out. But we must suppose a vastly stronger magnifying-glass in the human eye; for we see things around us, not the size they are pictured on the mirror of the eye, but their natural size. Then, you know, in a looking-glass, you see everything reversed. The right looks left, and the left right. Just so it is in the mirror of the eye; so that we should see everything wrong in this way if there were not another mirror to reflect the thing again, and so put it all right. And these mirrors and magnifyingglasses are nothing but three different coloured little skins or humours.

"Then there is another wonder still. When I look at you, my boy, you are twice reflected in me, for I have two eyes; yet I see only one Raphael; and if I shut one

eye, I do not see half of you, but one whole Raphael still. Is not this wonderful? But, now, how does the soul feel the picture which the eye has faithfully taken of things around? Why, as insects and snails and oysters have feelers, which they put out to try what is before them, so the soul has its feelers, which look like very fine threads springing from the brain, and which are called nerves. Two such feelers come out of the brain, reach up to the mirrors (the lenses) of the eye, gently feel the picture there, and convey it to the soul; but how they do this nobody can tell."

"It is marvellous, indeed," said Magda and her mother at once. They had both been listening far more attentively than Raphael, who could understand very little or nothing of it all.

"Yes," said the physician, "the eye is, like the ear, a mysterious masterpiece of God's handiwork. Like the watcher on a tower, it is placed high up in the head, that it may look around far and wide. Suppose the eye had been placed in the foot, now. What dust and dirt would have flown into it! What damage it would have been exposed to! In walking through high grass, or through a little stream—why, we could not have seen anything at all! But God has placed the eye, in His wisdom, high up, in a deep, safe cavity, under the shadow of the brow, which wards off from it blows and bruises."

"That is true again," said Mrs. Tube. "How often, in the dark, I have run against an open door, and struck my forehead

so that the sparks have danced before my eyes; but the eye itself was uninjured, though the skin all round may have swollen up black and blue."

"In many ways the eye is shielded," continued the physician. "Over it stands a little bush of thick hair, the eyebrow: this keeps away much that would otherwise find its way into the eye, and hurt it. Then there are two other lines of hair, the eyelashes, to guard it still more closely from anything hurtful; and when we are sleeping, and cannot protect the eye at all ourselves, a soft covering, the eyelid, is drawn all over it, and shuts it up tight. And if, in spite of all this, a speck of anything does find its way at any time into the eye, the little fountain of tears opens and floods out the enemy."

Here Magda took courage and said, "But, sir, how is it, then, that my brother cannot see? He has two eyes, eyebrows, eyelashes, and eyelids; is there no picture on his eye?"

"My child," answered the doctor, "the first thing needful for sight is light. No light enters your brother's eyes; and I expect the reason for this is that a hard, darkening skin has grown over them."

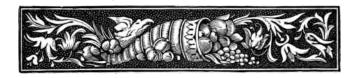
"Yes, that is it, sir, I believe," said Mrs. Tube. "When my husband was alive, he consulted a famous eye-doctor about him, and he gave the same opinion as you, sir; but he added, that no operation could be attempted then."

The physician carefully examined Raphael's eyes, and said that he believed something might soon be done, only he wished first to put the boy, who was weakly, under a course of strengthening medicine. "The best thing," he said, "for him, and for you too, Mrs. Tube, would be a change of air; and I should much advise you, as soon as the warmer season comes on, to try the baths at Teplitz; there is nothing better for rhumatism, and the waters would do you both good."

Before leaving, he wrote a prescription for Mrs. Tube, and for Raphael, and gave them some advice about diet.

Mrs. Tube promised to follow his directions as far as she could, and expressed her warm gratitude to the stranger, and to her kind friend who had brought him.





CHAPTER XI.

The Journey.

"Oh, green was the corn as we rode on our way,
And bright were the dews on the blossoms of May;
And dark was the sycamore's shade to behold,
And the oak's tender leaf was of emerald and gold.
The thrush from the holly, the lark from the cloud,
The chorus of rapture sung jovial and loud;
From the soft vernal skies to the soft grassy ground,
There was beauty above us, beneath, and around."



NE soft, warm morning in spring, a light spring-cart drew up before Mrs. Tube's door. Mr. Gloaming's unwearied kindness had procured the means to

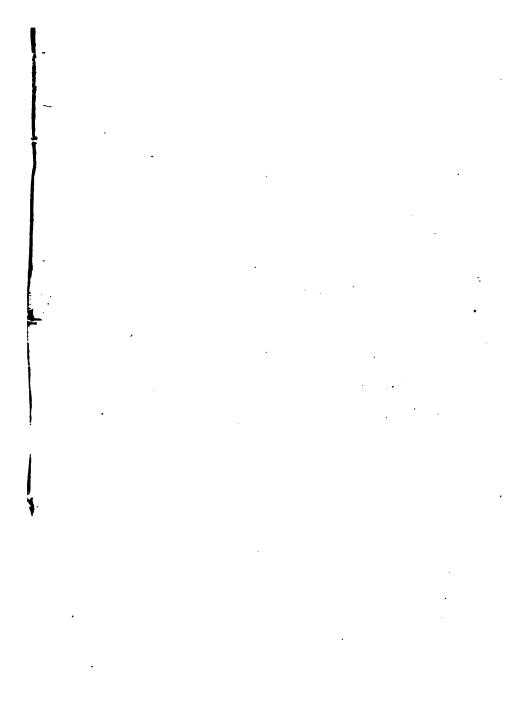
convey her and her family to Teplitz, that they might try the effect of change of air, and the baths which the physician recommended.

The day for their journey had come. Magda arranged a mattrass and pillows as comfortably as she could in the cart for her mother, and they started. The children were in wild delight: Raphael, with the song of the birds, and the sweet scent flung on the air, from the young woods and wild-flowers; Magda, with the view of what seemed to her an earthly paradise.

Lofty blue mountains, with clouds resting on their summits, or creeping down their sides, enclosed the blooming valley in which Teplitz lay. Here, like the nest of a rock-eagle, rose the tiny chapel of St. John, on the summit of a pine-clad hill. Crowning another height were the dark, desolate ruins of what was once a robbers' tower; in the valley, wreaths of curling smoke pointed out the scattered houses of a little village.

Magda's wonder and delight was not half exhausted when they reached the town of Teplitz. Here they hired a little house, and when she had settled her mother and Raphael, Magda set out to explore the place. Fresh marvels constantly met her eye. In many places hot springs rose, steaming from the ground. Ceaselessly, as long as man can remember, in summer and winter alike, has good mother earth sent up this boiling mineral-water from her mysterious subterranean kitchen. It is, indeed, a healing stream which God in His mercy has provided for His suffering creatures, and every summer thousands of poor rhumatic patients prove its power to cure. They come to the baths first, leaning on crutches, or with the support of some friendly arm; and, after a few weeks, they are able to tread on the lame foot, to stretch out the crippled hand. Old pains fly away, young vigour returns, and, with restored life and power, the sufferers so long confined to the house are able to ramble about and feast their eyes on views of valley and mountain, meadow, wood, and stream.

Magda heard much of this on her first walk, and went





THE EYE-BATH.

home all impatience for her mother to try the wonderworking spring.

The next day Mrs. Tube began her baths, and very soon found them give her relief and ease. Raphael bathed also, but of course without any effect on his eyes.

After the bath the invalids were ordered to lie in bed for a while, and this was the time Magda always chose for her ramblings and explorings in the beautiful gardens of the castle.

One day she discovered, in a corner of the garden, a little enclosed spring, over which was written, in large letters, "Eye-bath."

As if she had found a treasure, Magda rushed home wild with delight.

As soon as ever Raphael was allowed to get up, she made him come with her to the garden and bathe first one eye, and then the other, in the little cup of water from the spring. She expected nothing less than that the skin which the physician had told her kept out the light, would at once fall from his eyes like scales, and was bitterly disappointed when, in answer to her repeated questions whether he did not see anything, Raphael still shook his head.

Day after day they went to the spring, always with fresh hope, and always to be disappointed, till the visitors in the garden began to watch them with interest and sympathy.

One day when Magda had just filled the cup once more,

and was looking anxiously into Raphael's face, as he dipped his sightless eyes in the water, a gentleman in a grey summer coat stopped, and said to her, "Does not the boy see well?"

Tears filled Magda's eyes, as, shaking her head sadly, she answered, "My brother is blind, sir."

"Then the eye-bath will do him no good," said the stranger. "Should you like to see?" he asked Raphael, after looking closely into his eyes.

"Oh, yes, sir," answered the boy.

"Then I hope you will some day," said the stranger, and asked Magda their name and address. "You shall soon see me again," he said.

With a beating heart Magda led Raphael home and repeated the stranger's words to her mother.

They had not long to wait in expectation. When the strange gentleman came, he told them that he was a physician to the court, and had just arrived with the prince on a visit to Teplitz. He proposed to perform the operation on Raphael's eyes the next day.

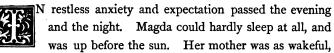




CHAPTER XII.

The Operation.

"He openeth the eyes of the blind."



and only on much entreaty from Magda, remained in bed till the usual time for rising.

As quietly as she could, in her eager haste, Magda shook and swept and dusted, and arranged and re-arranged everything in the little room. Then she washed and dressed herself with even more care than usual. She would have liked next to wake Raphael and dress him, but it was still much too early; so she ran out a little way into the meadow by the water's edge, and gathered a handful of beautiful forget-me-nots, which she put in a saucer on the window-sill.

Not a word was spoken about the great event of the day. The physician had urged that Raphael was on no account to be excited, so Magda and her mother could only express their feelings to each other by looks and nods.

The doctor had fixed nine o'clock for his visit; at six Magda was already impatiently expecting him.

When the time came for their morning family prayer, Mrs. Tube felt her voice so trembling, and such a choking sensation in her throat, that she dared not for Raphael's sake try to pray aloud. So she just said, "We will each pray to God silently to-day for His blessing on what lies before us." She then hurried into the kitchen to hide her own feelings, and to cast all her care upon the Lord. Very earnestly little Magda, too, lifted her prayer to Him who had heard her in the prison, and who understands the voiceless language of the heart.

Punctually at nine o'clock the physician arrived. He saw the quivering excitement of the little family, but appeared to take no notice of it, and began a lively conversation with them on indifferent matters.

A full quarter of an hour passed before he introduced the real object of his visit; then he said, "My good friends, I am half afraid whether I shall be able to fulfil my promise to open the boy's eyes to-day. I should like just to try him this morning, to see whether he will keep still when I bring the instrument to his eye. Let us see, Raphael, if you can hold yourself straight up and still." He led him to the window, and told him to keep his eyes steadily open.

"Does that hurt?" he asked, touching the eye with an instrument so small that Mrs. Tube and Magda could not see what it was.

"No, sir, not at all," answered Raphael.

"I thought not," said the doctor. "Now try and not blink for a little while." He brought the instrument again to the eye. Breathlessly Mrs. Tube and Magda watched from the other side of the room. Suddenly, Raphael gave a little cry. Both shuddered in terror; they feared the physician had brought the instrument too near Raphael's eye and had injured it.

"What did you cry out for?" said he, quite quietly to Raphael, at the same time putting a little cushion over the eye; "that could not possibly have hurt you?"

"No," said Raphael, "it did not exactly hurt; but it seemed to me as if——" He stopped. He could not tell how to say what he meant.

"I know," said the doctor; "if you had ever seen a storm, now, you would say it was as if a flash of lightning had passed before your eye."

"Yes, yes," answered Raphael; "that is just what I mean. I remember when I was a very little child shrinking from the lightning, and it seemed like that to my eye just now."

"I am glad to hear it," said the physician; "that gives me great hope that the operation will succeed. Now let me try whether it is the same with the other eye."

After a few seconds Raphael exclaimed, "Oh, I see something!—a hand with fingers!—a whole arm!—a head! Oh!"

Indescribable was the effect which these few words had upon the mother and daughter. With a cry of astonished delight they rushed towards Raphael.

"God be praised!" both exclaimed with one voice. But the doctor held them back.

"Not so fast," he said, smiling; "a little more patience yet," and he covered the second eye as he had done the first.

After a while he allowed Raphael to look up. The first object on which his opened eyes rested was the face of his mother, who tenderly stretched out both her arms to him. "My son!" she said; "my twice precious son!"

"Is it you, mother dear?" said Raphael, throwing himself into her arms. For the first time for so many years his lips met hers without feeling for them. "Now I know just how you look," he went on.

"Raphael, Raphael!" sobbed little Magda, "have you no look for me? Let me see your living eyes now."

He turned to her directly, and the brother and sister, who had loved each other so much in sorrow, were clasped in one another's arms in joy.

"Enough, now," said the physician. "We must not try the eyes too much at first, only little by little must they get accustomed to the daylight. For a few more days, my boy, you must be willing to remain blind." So saying, he was about to cover Raphael's eyes again; but the child pleaded, "Oh, just one more look, sir, only one!" Slowly he turned his eyes round the room. "How nice everything looks," he said; "so much nicer than I had thought." His eyes rested on the flowers Magda had gathered in the morning. "Are those the forget-me-nots you brought before breakfast, Magda? Is that beautiful colour blue? Oh, how glorious the blue sky must look!" He was just turning round quickly to look out of the window when the doctor stopped him.

"No more to-day," said he firmly, and placed a bandage over Raphael's eyes. "When the boy first begins to use his sight," he continued, "the room must be darkened. You must hang all you can before the window to shade the light, Mrs. Tube, and every day let in a little more till Raphael's eyes gradually become accustomed to it. If you neglect this, or through mistaken kindness allow him the full light too soon, his sight may go again, and beyond the power of recovery."

Mrs. Tube willingly promised to obey. "May I," she said, deeply moved, "may I kiss the hand which has restored sight to my child? I can never, never, repay you, sir. May God do so with His richest blessings!"

Magda's eyes were still full of tears. "O sir," she said, "how happy you have made us all! If I could only tell you what I feel! but I can't."

· "And I," said Raphael, "have only words of thanks to give; but I will pray, yes, always pray for you, sir. And all day long, when I see anything that makes me glad, I shall think of you."

"Well, well, that will do," said the doctor, really touched; "I am very glad the operation has succeeded." And he *looked* very glad. From many of his rich patients he would have received a purse of gold for such a service; but the artless thanks of this poor family spoke more to his heart than the gifts of the wealthy.

"Blessed is he that considereth the poor," says the Bible. Happy in that blessing the physician went his way.



CHAPTER XIII.

The **Belight** of the Eyes.

"Fair are the meadows,
Fairer still the woodlands
Robed in the blooming garb of spring.
Jesus is purer, Jesus is fairer,
Who makes the woeful heart to sing.
Fair is the sunshine,
Fairer still the moonshine,
And the twinkling starry host.
Jesus shines purer, Jesus shines brighter
Than all the angels heaven can boast."
OLD CRUSADER'S HYMN.



NEW world now opened to Raphael. His great delight had before been in hearing, tasting, feeling; but every other enjoyment was now swallowed up

in that of seeing.

He made many curious mistakes at first, because he could form no idea of distance; everything that he saw he fancied to be close to him. When the cure was completed, and the bandage was taken off his eyes, he stretched out his hand immediately for some flowers which were in a mug at least five yards from him. He was much surprised that he did not reach them. His mother laughed, and said, "My dear Raphael, you remind

me of a little child, which always stretches out its hand for the most distant things, and is vexed if it does not get them. You will make many such mistakes, I dare say, before experience and feeling help you to judge of the distance of objects."

And so it was; a little while afterwards, Magda dropped her scissors, Raphael stooped directly to pick them up, but felt for them in vain. They were several feet farther off than he thought.

When the last shades were taken away from the window, and Raphael saw the cottages opposite, he exclaimed in amazement, "Why, where are the window-panes, mother? There are only the wooden frames left;" and he would certainly have run his head through the glass if his mother had not held him back. Then he examined the panes very curiously, and could hardly understand how such a hard, solid substance as glass should be made so transparent.

Another time, when his mother was sitting at her work, he came to her, and said in a shy, half-whisper, "Mother, somebody was peeping through that little window there in our room. Who lives next to us?"

Mrs. Tube looked up and laughed heartily, as Raphael pointed to the small looking-glass, which hung against the wall.

"That is only a looking-glass, my boy," she replied, "and the person peeping in was no one but yourself."

This was more than Raphael could believe. His mother was obliged to take down the glass to convince him that it was no window. Then he could not understand how he could

come into the mirror. He turned it over again, fancying his likeness must be behind it. Still more did his wonder increase when he saw his picture in the glass laugh as he laughed; and then he amused himself for some time with making his reflection laugh, cry, blink its eyes, show its teeth and tongue, and so on, till the wonder was exhausted.

"Mother, if there had been no looking-glass," he said presently, "I should never have known what I was like—what sort of hair, eyes, nose, and teeth I had. I wonder how it is I can't see myself; I can see you."

"That is a very funny question, Raphael. Why, your face is too close to your eye for you to see it. You can never see anything unless it is a little distance from you. Perhaps we may learn a little lesson from this. It is always much easier to see faults and blemishes in others than in ourselves; so wise people say, there is nothing more difficult than to know one's self."

Raphael's questions became in fact almost endless. One evening, towards sunset, Mrs. Tube set out with her children for a walk. They chose the way towards the castle hill, but their progress was very slow, for Raphael stopped every few steps to ask an explanation of something that met his eyes. The smoke and steam, curling up from the chimneys and hot springs, seemed to him a wonderful thing. As he passed the spring, he tried to grasp the thin, blue vapour, and could not understand how it always escaped his fingers. Then the trees, with their endless varieties of form and leaf, were marvellous to him; and his mother must tell him the name of the tiniest

insect and plant. She was often puzzled, and her patience sometimes almost worn out. From the glorious mountain it seemed as if Raphael would never be able to take his eyes.

"How much earth," he said, "it must take to make such a mountain!"

"Yes, indeed!" answered his mother; "men might take millions of barrows-full away, and no one would see the difference. The greatest king in the world could not have such a mountain thrown up, if hundreds of thousands of men were employed to do it. But there are many other mountains much larger and higher than this; and the largest mountain is only like a grain of sand, compared to the size of the whole earth. Yes, children, the more you see, the more you will find that God is great in all His works, from the mote in the sunbeam to the glorious sun itself, which has just gone down there in the west. See, Raphael, what a bed he has in the sky! Those crimson clouds with shining edges are its gold-fringed curtains; and see how they change colour almost every minute, glowing with all the tints of the rainbow."

"And what is that bright spot, mother?" asked Raphael, pointing to the evening sky.

"That is a star," she answered. "I remember how your dear father loved to watch the sky, and study the stars. That star, he told me, is called Venus. It appears first of all the stars in the evening, and when all the others have faded in the morning light it still beams gently down. So it is called the evening and the morning star."

- "I remember a verse in our Bible about the bright and morning star," said Magda.
- "Is the sun very far away from us?" Raphael went on asking.
- "Very far indeed," said his mother. "If you were to get up for a whole year at six o'clock in the morning, and counted as fast as you could till six in the evening, without even stopping to eat or drink, you would not have counted the miles between us and the sun."
- "Well, but then how can the sun possibly light and warm our earth, as you have told me?"
- "It is another of God's wonders," answered his mother.

 "It is most difficult to understand how it warms us, for you would think that the nearer we got to it the more we should feel the heat; but people tell me it is just the other way, that the nearer we come to the sun the colder it is. On the top of a high mountain, for instance, you are in danger of freezing. I can't explain these things to you, my boy, for I do not know much about them myself."
- "Raphael," said Magda, merrily, "look round quickly, there is a fire-balloon going up." Raphael followed her finger eagerly till he saw a large golden ball rising slowly and majestically over the distant mountain—a wonderfully beautiful sight. He stood speechless. His mother and Magda watched his delight, which presently found words.
- "Oh! oh, mother!" he exclaimed, "who has made that? How much money it must have cost! and the people do not seem to notice it at all, but just go on their way."

"They see it," said his mother, "but they are so used to the sight that they do not observe it. It is to be seen almost every evening."

"Almost every evening!" said Raphael. "As long as I live, I shall never be tired of looking at it. I wish there were such a thing to be seen at Dresden, mother. How kind of the emperor to provide such a beautiful sight for his subjects. Of course nobody but the emperor could afford it."

"Don't be afraid!" said his mother; "you will see the same at Dresden, and it is sure to appear at the right time, whether there is any one looking out for it or not. He is indeed a great King who set this beautiful object in the heavens. It is the work of the King of kings Himself, my boy—what you are looking at is the moon." Magda laughed heartily at the success of her joke, but Raphael shook his head, and said—

"When I was blind and went out with you in the evening, I often heard you say, 'There is the moon rising,' but as coolly as if it were only a farthing candle, so that I can hardly believe that wonderful ball of light is really the moon!"

"You are right," answered his mother; "we do indeed think and speak too lightly of God's daily wonders. There are even some bad men, Raphael—thieves and others—who hate the moonlight, because it hinders their evil deeds."

It was now growing quite dark.

"Look over your head, my son, see the countless host of stars, millions of worlds, all around us."

Raphael looked up with folded hands till his eyes filled with tears of gratitude. Then he laid his head on his mother's arm and wept. "O mother," he said, "is not God good? is not He glorious? is not He kind?"

Slowly they walked home: Mrs. Tube and Magda had to lead Raphael again, just as when he was blind, for his eyes were fixed all the while on the starry sky.

Before getting into bed he went once more to the window, and looked earnestly and long into the now fully risen moon. "I understand now," he said, "for the first time, what a beautiful text that is—'The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon us and be gracious unto us.'" Amen.

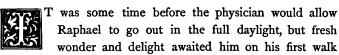




CHAPTER XIV.

Sowing and Reaping.

"See the shining dewdrops,
On the flowers strewed;
Proving, as they sparkle,
God is ever good.
Bring, my heart, thy tribute,
Songs of gratitude,
While all nature utters,
God is ever good."



in the early morning. As he and his mother and Magda turned their steps into the narrow path across the fields, the larks rose from their nests into the clear air, trilling their ceaseless song, while pigeons flew in and out among the eaves of the houses, and now and then an eagle swooped from his rocky home far up on the crag. Flocks of ducks and geese, quacking and screeching at the passers-by, led their young ones down to the pond, which shone like molten silver. Here, as far as the eye could reach, stretched a sea of blue flax-blossoms, there a golden field of rape-seed. Kingly poplars lifted their heads to heaven, gentle

willows bent over the stream, and here and there the snowy stem of a silver birch gleamed among the scented pine-woods. The meadows themselves flashed many-coloured lights from countless diamond points, as the bright sunbeams caught the sparkling dewdrops.

Raphael stood entranced. He wanted to gather some of the precious gems.

"Gather as many as you can," said his mother, and she and Magda laughed heartily at his amazement when the jewels turned to water beneath his touch.

"There is no such jeweller as the sun," said his mother.

"Our jewellers would have to work for months, cutting and polishing, to get such colours as those from a real diamond; and behold, every morning God calls forth in a moment, from a little drop of water, all the tints of ruby, sapphire, emerald, and diamond. The late sleeper misses this wonderful sight, Raphael; for when the sun is risen high, the dew dries off the grass, and the jewels are gone."

"I suppose," said Raphael, "you purposely did not tell me about all these things when I was blind for fear of making me unhappy. I never fancied anything half so beautiful, and you have been enjoying it all for years!"

Magda and her mother looked at each other ashamed. Custom had made them almost indifferent to these glories, till they looked at them with fresh interest for Raphael's sake.

Across the meadows they went into the castle garden, and first of all to the eye-bath. Raphael bent over the clear spring to fill the cup, but drew back surprised, and said to Magda,

"Some one has put a looking-glass in the water, I saw myself in it."

Magda laughed, and said, "We can always see ourselves in smooth, clear water, or in bright metal. They are looking-glasses which God has made for us." To convince her brother that there was nothing in the water, she stirred it quickly with her hand, and behold, the mirror was gone!

With fresh pleasure, Raphael watched the reflection of the drooping trees in the little lake in the garden. Shoals of carp, too, kept rising to the surface for the crumbs which the visitors were in the habit of throwing to them. After he had been standing some time by the water, he heard footsteps approaching, and turning round saw his kind friend, Dr. Windel, with another gentleman. He ran to him, and kissing his hand, said, "O sir, how happy you have made us."

"How so?" asked the strange gentleman. Before Dr. Windel could answer, Mrs. Tube spoke eagerly, "O sir, he has restored my boy's sight!"

"Why did you keep such secrets from me, Windel?" said the stranger, who was, in fact, the prince. "May not I share in your joys? So you are very happy now you can see again, are you, my boy?" he continued, turning to Raphael. "You may well be. Is there nothing else you wish for?"

"No, sir, nothing," Raphael replied; "I only wish I could show the kind doctor how thankful I am."

"Well said, my boy," answered the prince; "now suppose I do that for you?" and drawing a brilliant ring from his finger, he turned to Dr. Windel, and said, "In the name of this child

I thank you; and beg you, in remembrance of your deed of mercy, to keep and wear this ring." He then asked a few questions about the circumstances of the poor family, and putting a ten-pound note into Mrs. Tube's hand, he said to the physician, as he turned away—

"You can do more than I. I can only give a little money; you, with the blessing of God, can make the blind to see."

With full and grateful hearts, Mrs. Tube and her children went home. On the road, she said—

"We have, indeed, found more good people in the world than bad; how many friends has God sent us?—Mr. Tanzer, Mr. Gloaming, Dr. Windel, and the Prince. There was only Tanzer's apprentice who really tried to do us harm, and perhaps he knew no better."

"Mother, mother," cried Magda, as they entered the town, "there he is! there he is!"

"Who?" asked Mrs. Tube.

"Master Tanzer's apprentice—wicked Rupert," said Magda, and drew close to her mother. It was indeed he. His hands were fastened with ropes behind his back, and he was being led along by the police, with a number of bad-looking men, all bound. A crowd was gathered to look at them.

"What have they done?" asked Mrs. Tube of one of the lookers-on.

"They are smugglers," answered the man. "When they were caught with their smuggled goods, they defended themselves fiercely, and wounded some of the guard. They are being taken off to the gaol."

"You see, my children," said Mrs. Tube, "how, sooner or later, sin brings its punishment. How could he have come among the smugglers, Magda?"

"Master Tanzer turned him away, mother, because he found he could not trust him at all. Beside the lies which he told last Christmas about me, Master Tanzer found that, behind his back, Rupert sold goods and kept the money. He never would work anywhere, so I suppose he went to the smugglers."

Mrs. Tube was particularly thankful for the prince's kind gift, because it would enable her to return to Dresden without any further assistance from her generous friend, Mr. Gloaming. She knew he would not allow her to repay what she had already received, but she was very anxious, now her health was so far restored, to be at home again, earning something for herself. Magda, too, sometimes longed for her old work at Master Tanzer's, and Raphael was impatient to show that he could now be of some use in the world.

On calculating, Mrs. Tube found that with the money the prince had given her, and what she had before, she should be able to pay their rent and their journey home, and would still have nearly five pounds left.

When Magda heard this, she said, "O mother, if we could only take back some little present for kind Master Tanzer!"

"And something for Mr. Gloaming, I should like," said Raphael.

"Well, children, we will see," said Mrs. Tube; "though we hope to get to work as soon as we get home, we ought to keep a little stock for a rainy day; and I am not sure that

we ought to spend money enough to get anything really worth taking."

The next day they went into a shop to get the prince's note changed. There were several watches in the shop, some being repaired, and Raphael looked at the delicate little wheels and springs with curious interest.

"Is it the first time you have seen a watch taken to pieces?" asked the shopkeeper, observing him.

"He has been blind ever since he was a baby," said Mrs. Tube, "and has only just recovered his sight."

The shopkeeper told Raphael to stand close by the man at work, and he would show him how all the little chains and wheels and springs and pins fitted together and made the watch go. Magda meanwhile was looking at the things on the counter, when she suddenly exclaimed, "Mother! here is Master Tanzer's great watch!"

"Nonsense, child," said her mother; "how could Mr. Tanzer's watch come here?"

"I don't know, mother; that bad boy, Rupert, may have stolen it, and sold it, for I am sure it is Master Tanzer's. I know it by this green silk ribbon, which I fastened on myself with a double knot, and by the stag on the face of the watch. Master Tanzer was very proud of it, for it was his grandfather's."

"May I ask if you know where this watch came from?"
Mrs. Tube asked the shopkeeper.

"No, ma'am, I don't," he said; "I bought it about a month ago of a young man who said he was out of work, and wanted

to sell it. It's not worth much, for the works are very old and bad; you shall have it for a trifle if you like."

"Oh, do buy it, mother. I should so like to take it back to dear Mr. Tanzer."

So the watch was bought, and Magda now was all impatience to be gone. Raphael, too, longed to see his darling Brighteye, who had been left in Master Tanzer's care. He knew no place would ever look so beautiful to him as Teplitz, where he had first seen the wonderful works of God; but since God Himself was everywhere, and sun, moon and stars, trees, fields and flowers, everywhere spoke of His goodness, he was willing to go. When the week for their lodgings should be up, they fixed to return to Dresden.





CHAPTER XV.

A Strange Discovery.

"Oh, sharper than a serpent's tooth it is To have a thankless child!"



DAY or two before they were to leave Teplitz, Raphael came running into the house, and said, "O mother, may we go and see the circus? It has just

come into the town. I have heard the people talking about all the wonderful things to be seen, and I saw the beautiful horses go by. O mother, if we might only have such a treat, just once!"

Mrs. Tube did not at all like circuses. She knew how much evil and wrong and danger is often connected with them; but Raphael pleaded so hard that, just for once in their lives, they might see, that she could not bear to disappoint him. She dared not trust the two children alone; so, in the afternoon, she got ready and took them herself.

Raphael's amusement began long before the show. He had never seen such a crowd of people together before, and was much entertained with watching the different faces and dress of the spectators. "Look," he said to his mother, "there are some young men who have hung little round windows before

their eyes; what do they do it for? Are they afraid something will fly into their eyes?"

. "Those are eye-glasses, Raphael," said his mother, laughing.
"People whose eyes are weak, or who cannot see things a long way off, use them to help their sight; and some young men wear them just to follow the fashion."

"What do you mean by following the fashion, mother?"

"I mean doing things just because other people do them, and for the sake of appearance."

"Well, but do people think that those little round windows look prettier than the eye which God has made so beautiful?"

"It is certainly a great mistake if they do, Raphael; but people who care only about fashion often do very silly things."

Just at that moment Raphael's ear caught the first strains of music, and then the performers appeared, and he had no more time to talk. His eyes were riveted on the stage, where a man began to walk across a tight-rope, stretched high above the floor. Raphael expected every instant to see him fall, but he stepped as firmly and steadily as if he were on solid ground. Raphael held his breath as he saw him next begin all sorts of neck-breaking gymnastics in the middle of the rope. Now he stood on his head, now hung by one foot, now turned round and round, and over and over like a windmill. At last, he carried across a chair and a little table, and sat down on the rope to take a regular meal.

When he had finished his feats the circus-riders appeared, standing on the backs of their horses, performing all kinds of antics as they galloped round and round; sometimes leaping over a rope, sometimes jumping through hoops and casks, and always alighting again safely on the horses' backs.

After the horse-riding came a farce, in which the little harlequin-boy was made the butt of all the jokes and kicks and cuffs of the other actors. He did not seem to have been long in the company, for he did his part shyly and awkwardly, and shrunk from the hard treatment he received. Presently a sudden blow from one of the men knocked the mask from his face, and Magda gave a little cry as she caught sight of his features.

"Mother," she whispered, with a terrified face, "the little circus-boy is Mr. Gloaming's Ernest! I saw him quite plainly."

"Impossible, Magda; how could you fancy such a thing?"

"It is not fancy, mother; I used to see him so often in the stable-yard when I went to Mr. Gloaming's kitchen for the soup. I am sure it is Ernest, mother."

All impatience, Magda waited for the end of the show that she might get to speak to the poor boy, and put an end to her mother's doubts. But she could find no opportunity to see him, and was obliged to go home unsatisfied. All night she could not rest; and when she did sleep for a little while, she woke up with a start of fright to think of Ernest among those rough, low men.

Early in the morning she begged her mother to come with her to the place where the circus-people were, to ask something about the boy. Just outside the house they

met the little harlequin of the night before, now without a mask, and in his own clothes, going with a jug to fetch some water.

"Ernest!" said Magda, for it was indeed he.

In his fright at hearing his own name, he nearly let the pitcher fall, but just saving himself, he turned away and pretended not to know he was spoken to.

Magda ran up to him, caught his hand, and, looking in his face, which grew crimson as he saw her, said, "Have you forgotten poor Magda Tube, Ernest?"

"Good morning, Magda," he said at last, with a great effort keeping down the tears which for many reasons were ready to come.

"What are you doing with the circus company?" asked Magda.

"I am going to be a horse-rider," he answered. "It is a fine life. We have music every day, and fine clothes and fireworks, and lots of fun. And we get a mint of money—twenty pounds a night sometimes, and we shall go all over the world seeing new places. It is a capital life, and I can ride on horseback as often as I like, and all for nothing."

"I did not see much to call fine clothes on you either last night or this morning," said Magda. "I saw you get plenty of knocking about."

"Oh, that was all fun," said Ernest.

"I should not like such kind of fun. It must send you to bed with aching sides and plenty of bruises, I am sure; and you might get your neck broken, Ernest."

"I wonder your parents should have let you go with such people," said Mrs. Tube.

"Oh, they will be glad enough to have one less at home to feed," said Ernest.

"Is it possible, child, that you are here without their knowledge?" Mrs. Tube asked.

Ernest looked confused. "I wished to spare them the pain of saying good-bye," he muttered. "Besides, I am not sure that my father would have let me come to be a horse-rider; but when I go home some day, a rich man in my, own carriage, he will be pleased enough."

"Unhappy boy!" exclaimed Mrs. Tube. "Do you think that any money would repay your father and mother for the hours and days of unspeakable anguish which you are causing them? After all their goodness to you from your very first breath, will you bring down their grey hairs with sorrow to the grave? All the treasures in the world would not weigh against a child's ingratitude. See, I am a poor woman, but if you offered me bags full of gold for one of my children, I would not take them."

"But," remonstrated Ernest, "I am not out of the world after all. What would my parents have done if I had died of measles or small-pox?"

"If God, who gave us our dear children, is pleased to take one away," answered Mrs. Tube, "our hearts overflow with grief; but we trust that He has taken them to Himself, which is far better than living here. We look forward, too, to meeting them again one day in His

presence. But what must the sorrow to parents be when a child steals away from his home to throw himself among evil men who will ruin both body and soul?"

"Hallo, harlequin! where is the young rascal? Must I break all your lazy bones with a horsewhip? Here, you thief." So shouted a rough voice from the window of the house.

Ernest turned deadly pale, and slunk out of sight. Then he stammered out, "The master is sometimes drunk in the morning, and speaks like that. We have to keep out of his way, then."

Magda's mother wrung her hands. "You poor miserable child, what hands have you fallen into! Did your father ever speak to you like that? Were you ever abused in your own home as you were last night in the circus before all those people?"

"Oh, it is not always so bad," said Ernest. "Often in the afternoon and evening they give me brandy and wine to drink to make me merry for the evening."

"And does not every drop burn like fire when you think of your mother's tears, Ernest? However happy you may fancy you are now, you will soon feel the gnawing of the worm that dieth not. That is an evil conscience, my boy; and it will pursue you when you get up in the morning and when you lie down at night, and will give you no rest. In your dreams you will see your mother's weeping face; and when you hear the church bell toll, you will think, 'Perhaps I have made her die of a broken heart,'

Will she awake, do you think, when you stand by her grave with your bags of gold?"

Ernest was crying bitterly. "O my boy, turn back before it is too late; before your poor little limbs are all tortured and broken. If you fall ill, who do you think will nurse you? Your horse-riders? No, indeed; they will leave the sick boy to his fate. And listen: I am almost forty years old, but I have never in my life seen a rich horse-rider or rope-walker. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred they either come to some bad end in their youth, or have a miserable old age of poverty. O my child, there is no true pleasure in such a life. Remember how happy you were last Christmas in doing good to the poor and needy, and come back with us."

"I could not if I would," said Ernest. "My master will not let me go."

"See how true the Bible saying is, children: 'He that committeth sin is the *slave* of sin.' You have made yourself the slave of a bad, hard master, poor Ernest; but you must arise, and return to your father, and all will be well yet."

"Ah, I dare not do that," said Ernest. "I have been too, wicked to go back to my father; he would not receive me."

"Have you no more trust in him than that, my poor child? Have you never read of the Prodigal Son? Just try, and you will soon find that both your earthly and your heavenly Father will be ready to receive and to forgive you."

Little by little, Mrs. Tube overcame the boy's unwillingness and fear; and then he told her how he had, indeed, found the circus-life very different from what he had expected. He had often been obliged to sleep in the stable with the horses, and had been beaten and abused and sometimes half starved by his master and the other men. The exercises which he was obliged to go through every day made his bones ache, so that sometimes he tossed about all night with pain. And there was much quarreling and bad language used in the company.

Mrs. Tube thought it safest not to let him return to the house at all. She advised him to put back the pitcher in the stable, and follow her as quickly as he could. He did so, and she took him home to their little house. She then went to her friend Dr. Windel, and told him the whole story, and he promised to arrange the matter with the circus-master. The man, at first, demanded a considerable sum for the boy's keep; but when Dr. Windel threatened to have him up before the magistrate for carrying off a boy without the knowledge of his parents, he withdrew his claim.

All the arrangements were now made for Mrs. Tube and her family to leave the next day.





CHAPTER XVI.

Clear Shining after Rain.

"Cometh sunshine after rain, After mourning, joy again; After heavy, bitter grief, Dawneth surely sweet relief.

As God willeth, march the hours, Bringing joy at last in showers; And whate'er we asked is ours."

HE small spring-van which Mrs. Tube had engaged to take herself and her children back to Dresden, had to carry one extra passenger—Ernest, the runaway

boy. While the others were rejoicing in their happy return home, he sat quite still—pale-faced, heavy-eyed, with a dead weight on his heart. There was no gladness for him in the blue heaven, the brilliant sun, the golden morning, the rustling breeze. He took no interest in the merry talk and jokes of his companions; the nearer they came to home, the more troubled he looked. He had, indeed, been very glad to find himself freed from his bondage to the circus-master; but now he feared to see the face of his deeply injured parents. In vain Mrs. Tube tried to cheer him; he felt a choking in his throat, and could not swallow even the nice sandwiches and

little cakes which she had brought for the children on the journey. He was looking all the while uneasily along the road, but shrank back if he saw any one coming. "That is the power of conscience;" whispered Mrs. Tube to her children, who were much troubled at Ernest's miserable looks.

They were within seven or eight miles of home, when a gig, driven by a gentleman, came quickly along the road towards "My father!" cried Ernest, recognising him instantly, and drawing closer than ever to the side of the wagon-tilt, that he might not be seen. Of old, he used always to spring to meet his father; now, his only wish was to hide his face from him. As the gig drew near, Mrs. Tube saw that it was indeed Mr. Gloaming. He looked very grave; deep furrows were on his brow. In his abstraction, he would not have noticed Mrs. Tube and her children, if she had not told her driver to stop, and herself addressed the heart-broken father. With a great effort he forced a kindly smile in answer to her greeting; and heard, with a faint sort of pleasure, that Mrs. Tube was cured, and Raphael had recovered his sight. But when Mrs. Tube asked after his own family, he gave at first only a deep sigh, then he said, "Ah! Mrs. Tube, I have become a very unhappy father; my son Ernest, my first-born, has wickedly run away from us." Here Ernest nearly betrayed himself by his violent start.

"Yes," Mr. Gloaming went on, "he used to be such a good boy, and we counted on him as the joy and stay of our old age; but he has stolen away from us, and joined a strolling rope-dancer's company. His poor mother cannot be com-

forted, and seems ready to sink under the blow. Ah, it is the heaviest that can ever smite parents' hearts, when a child so deceives and deserts them." His eyes were full of tears as he spoke.

"I am like the shepherd who leaves the ninety and nine sheep to go after the one that is lost," said Mr. Gloaming. "Oh, if I might only find him! How gladly would we receive him back! After much inquiry, I found that he had really joined this circus company, and that they were gone in the direction of Teplitz; and I cannot rest without going there to seek him out."

"Do not be anxious about him any more, dear sir," said Mrs. Tube. "You have been our best friend and benefactor and now I bring you a child who shall take the place of the old Ernest, and henceforward give you nothing but happiness." As she spoke she tried to pull Ernest forward from his seat in the corner.

"It cannot be my own child!" exclaimed Mr. Gloaming; but before he could say another word, Ernest was clambering into the gig, and threw himself, sobbing, on his father's neck, crying, "Forgive me! O father, forgive me!"

And he was forgiven; and quietly and thoughtfully, but with hearts full of gratitude to God, and love to one another, the father and son drove home together.

Mr. Gloaming was deeply thankful to Mrs. Tube, for the trouble she had taken to save his boy. "I did a little for you, in your need," he said; "and God has made you return it

into my own bosom a thousand-fold: I will never forget the lesson."

A very hearty welcome awaited Mrs. Tube and her children the next day, when they went to Mr. Tanzer's. He led them through his workshop into the room where we first saw him at breakfast with his men, and there, making them sit down, he listened with astonished interest to the story of Raphael's cure and Mrs. Tube's recovery. But when Magda went up to him, and with a beaming face put the old watch into his hand, the warm-hearted man was quite overcome: "Oh, how I have missed the dear old thing!" he said; "I have loved it ever since my grandfather used to show it to me when I was a little child. I knew that bad fellow, Rupert, must have stolen it, but little thought I should ever see it again; now, Magda, what's to pay for it?"

"Nothing, nothing, Master Tanzer; you were our best friend, and we were able to get it with the money the prince gave us. Do take it, as a token of gratitude from us all; and please let me come to work again."

So the old working-days began once more; but how different they were from the dark, gloomy ones, full of trouble and sorrow of the year before! God blessed the industry of both mother and daughter; and they lived, not in plenty, but in comfort and content. Raphael soon showed so much talent for painting that he became in time a student in the School of Art.

After years of earnest study of God's wonderful works, he painted a picture of the Saviour healing the man born blind.

The countenance of the Divine Healer bore, ennobled and glorified, the features of the good physician who had touched the painter's darkness into light; and in a noble youth standing by, was traced the likeness of the prince. The blind man's face was Raphael's own. Large sums were offered to him for this picture, but he would accept none of them; he packed it in a case, and sent it to Dr. Windel. Of course, the physician showed it to the prince, who was hardly more pleased with the masterly painting, than with the refined and generous expression of true gratitude. He at once appointed Raphael painter to the court, with a considerable salary; and Raphael gladly made a home for his mother.

Ernest Gloaming never forgot the bitter lesson of his youth; he grew up a steady and diligent man of business, and Magda is his wife. Very often you may hear her cheerful voice singing about her house:—

"Goodness and mercy, all my days
Shall surely follow me;
And in God's house, for evermore,
My dwelling-place shall be."



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